

PILO-TAIKITA

A History of Palatka, Florida

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## PREFACE

The importance of Palatka to Florida's history can be attributed to the geographical position of the town on the St. Johns River. It served as a natural artery into the interior and because of a physical change in the river just to the south of Palatka, the area has attracted the attention of even the earliest travelers.

Ultimately the reliance led in part to Palatka's rise and fall as a center of economic and political importance to the state. The heyday of Palatka has passed, which does not detract from the role it once played however. This is the story of the development of the area.

There are many to whom I am indebted. I sincerely thank each of you who I contacted relative to this study. I especially thank the City Commission which initiated the undertaking in the summer of 1965. To those members, Mayor Frank Hancock, and Commissioners John Arrington, Dave Broadway, Toby Cameron and George Mitchell, and to City Manager Harold Williams and City Attorney Eugene Eastmoore, I wish to extend an especial thank you. Your attitudes have been most encouraging throughout our relationship centered on the project; I hope you consider it worthwhile.

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## I. THE ORIGIN

"Palatka" was corrupted from the Seminole Pilo-taikita, which translated means, literally, boat (pilo) ford (taikita) or "crossing."<sup>1</sup> Other local names are included in Table One.

The pre-history of the area reveals that Indians occupied the Palatka vicinity as long as four thousand years ago. Goggin declared the river valley had the "longest history of human occupation in Florida."<sup>2</sup>

There are sixty-seven mounds in what is now Putnam County; one of these was located on what is now Palatka; one just north of the city; one on Devil's Elbow; and eight in the vicinity of East Palatka.

The mounds in East Palatka were uncovered during earth moving operations relative to a housing project in 1928. The Smithsonian Institute was notified, but none of their field men were available to visit the site. Instead, the Smithsonian sent directions to George H. Dyke, advising him of how to excavate and pack skeletons found and then to send these to the

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<sup>1</sup>William Alexander Read, Florida Place-Names of Indian Origin and Seminole Personal Names (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1934) p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>John M. Goggin, "A Preliminary Definition of Archaeological Areas and Periods in Florida," American Antiquity, XIII No. 2 (October, 1947) p. 122.

TABLE 1  
ORIGIN OF INDIAN NAMES

Indian	Translation
Astatula	People originating from different tribes. <sup>a</sup>
Chipco	Crooked stream (?), deer place (?), rough waters (?). <sup>b</sup>
Okahumpka	Corrupted from "oki" (water) "hamki" (one), meaning lonely water or "oki-homaki" (bitter), thus bitter water. <sup>c</sup>
Oklawaha	From "aklowahi," or muddy water.
Pilaklikaha	Meaning big swamp site; south of Gainesville, home of the Seminole Chief Micanopy.
Seminole	Separatist.
Welaka	Corrupted from "yeaco," which from the Creek tongue is pronounced, "wilaka," meaning river or big water; "Welaka" is a corrupting of this, deriving from "wiwa" (water) and "alaka" (coming), thus water tide, implying that water is moving. <sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Colonel Hubbard L. Hart named one of his steamboats Astatula.

<sup>b</sup>Lake Chipco in Interlachen is named for a Seminole Chief of the same name who accompanied Osceola in the ambush of Major Dade (see below).

<sup>c</sup>Hart also had a steamer bearing this name.

<sup>d</sup>William Alexander Read, Florida Place Names of Indian Origin and Seminole Personal Names (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1934) p. 83.



Institution.<sup>3</sup>

The majority however, were upriver, near the north end of Lake George in the Mount Royal vicinity.<sup>4</sup>

The Palatka mound dates to what Goggin defined as the Early and Late Orange Period, roughly from 1500 B.C. to 100 B.C.<sup>5</sup> The two mounds on Murphy's Island were dated Early Orange. The Rollestown site also had a mound which dated to this latter period.

These inhabitants evolved into what is known generally as the Timucuan tribes, two of which were predominant in the Palatka area, the Saturiba and the Utina. They had little exposure to the early Europeans who initially explored Florida. Sebastian Cabot discovered the peninsula in 1497, but Ponce de Leon was the first to really provide an intimate record of his explorations. De Leon is known to have worked the area between the mouth of the St. Johns River to what is now St. Augustine, but probably came no closer than the latter point to the Palatka vicinity.

Another Spaniard, Panfilo de Marvaez, travelled north from Tampa Bay, paralleling the west coast of the peninsula in 1528, but he probably did not tour the valley either. It has as yet to be determined that Hernando De Soto penetrated to the valley in the same year.

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<sup>3</sup>Palatka Daily News, March 21, 1928.

<sup>4</sup>John M. Goggin, Space and Time Perspective in Northern St. Johns Archaeology (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1952) and papers.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

The first Europeans the Indians of the river valley met were the French, specifically Jean Ribault and his Huguenot colony, established near the mouth of the river (Fort Caroline) in 1562. Rene de Laudonniere sent an expedition up the river in 1564. He was on fairly intimate terms with the chief Saturiba.

The Spaniard Pedro Memendez de Avilas cultivated a warm relationship with the Indians, especially the Ais, Tekesta, and Calusa tribes to the south along the coast.

By the seventeenth century the Spanish established a chain of missions in Florida, operated initially by the Jesuits and later by the Franciscan Order. Some question exists as to whether the site of the mission of San Antonio de Enacape was at Mount Royal. This mission functioned during the period from 1597 to 1697.<sup>6</sup>

Ultimately the white man drove the Indian from Florida one way or another. Raids from the English colonies in Georgia and the Carolinas killed most of the northern inhabitants after 1700. Colonel Moore and his Creek allies drove what remained of the Apalachees and Timucuan to the St. Augustine vicinity in 1704. Another Englishman, Colonel Palmer, destroyed those settlements by 1727.

The Spanish attempted to protect these towns from the raiding parties. Thus emerged the fortified town especially east of the St. Johns River where the remnants of the East

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

Timucuan, Mayacas, and Yamasees gathered. They were encouraged to conduct raids of retribution on the English colonies, especially on those of the Indian allies of the British to the north.

By the time of the British period of Florida occupancy none of these peoples were to be found. During the middle of the eighteenth century, the Seminole appeared, a conglomeration of Creeks (who were dominant especially after 1800), Hitchitis, Oconees, Yamasees and Yuchees, who settled primarily in the prairie area in central Florida.

Seminole towns found near Palatka were located on the Oklawaha (1799 and 1821-2); at Etanie near the head of Rice Creek (1823); and at the mouth of the Oklawaha River (1823). A camp was located at Salt Spring in 1835.<sup>7</sup> More elatoration on the Seminole will be found below.

The two chief tribes of the sixteenth century, the Saturibas and Utinas, were quite large in terms of numbers. They were agriculturalists primarily, but lived in villages. It is estimated that the Saturibas numbered as many as forty-five hundred people, occupying the northern end of the valley. The Utinas, to the south, were a larger group, and a more powerful one. That they were prone to battle is obvious when one considers that the towns were stockaded and sentries were nearly always on duty.

Their organization was patrilineal; the chief's position was inherited, and each town had a chief. Over the whole

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 62.

confederation was a tribal chieftain, an all powerful individual.

Little was done to trace, archaeologically, Florida's history until the Civil War era. Jeffries Wyman, later curator of the Peabody Museum at Harvard, was the first, coming initially to Florida in 1860. He partially excavated the Murphy's Island mounds in 1876.

Some of the story remains to be told by the mounds that exist yet today, in varying degrees of intactness, throughout the area. In some cases, the story has been determined by the excavation of certain areas which have been professionally analyzed. Too often, however, have most sites been mutilated so that when it became possible to delve into them professionally, the sites had been physically destroyed.

One of the first excavations in the Palatka vicinity was undertaken in 1895. Clarence B. Moore led a party of pseudo-archaeologists to Murphy's Island just above Palatka where two mounds were ". . . totally demolished by us during four and one-half days in June."<sup>8</sup>

Moore reflected that the mounds had been visited by tourists as early as the 1870's, but the northern most site, visible from the steamboat landing, was still ". . . one of the most symmetrical earthworks . . . encountered in Florida . . ."<sup>9</sup> Its base was eighty feet in diameter and it was nearly twelve feet in height.

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<sup>8</sup>Clarence B. Moore, Certain Sand Mounds of Duval County, Florida (Philadelphia: Levy Type Company, 1895) p. 63.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

Human remains were found at forty-eight separate points in the mound, none of which was buried more than twelve feet beneath the debris. None were uncovered intact and none were found in immediate proximity to the artifacts which were excavated. The earthenware which was found was determined to be ". . . marked by inferior quality and design. . . ." although some vessels had supports, or "feet" on them, an "uncommon occurrence" according to Moore.<sup>10</sup>

Among other artifacts found in the mound were twenty-five vessels, sixty-six hatchets, twenty-six arrow and lance points, two quartz pendants and a ten inch crescent shaped jewelry item made of copper.<sup>11</sup>

The mound two hundred yards to the south was somewhat smaller, having a diameter of seventy feet and a height of ten feet. There were a ". . . large number of trees on it."<sup>12</sup> Many were orange trees and these served to protect the mound from being completely destroyed. Seven burials were found, all within five feet of the surface. Other mound locations are listed in the appendix.

The pre-history of the area, although incomplete, is interesting considering Palatka is very much involved in it due to geographical circumstances which the town enjoys. The valley provided the background for civilization as initially known in Florida, and to a certain extent, one of the more important in

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

the South. The agricultural potential was early determined, and later misconstrued to the extent that attempts were made to pursue activities that were at best a gamble for the farmer. The potential today is great because of the introduction of more scientific developments which have overcome earlier barriers to productivity. That potential has as yet to be realized, although attempts to alter this have already been made, but in many instances have failed.

## II. EARLY TRAVELERS ON THE ST. JOHNS

Several rivers on the North American continent flow in a northerly direction. Among others are: the Kaniampiskau, the George, the Harricanaw, the Mattagami, the Horton, the Peace, the Slave and the St. Johns. The latter hasn't always been called the St. Johns; the first map of the De Soto expedition referred to it as the Rio de Corrientes, and so it was known for nearly a century.

On May 1, 1562, Jean Ribaut entered the river, and in honor of the first day of that month, he re-named it the River of Maye. This honor was short-lived, for in 1580 when the Spaniard Menedez captured the French stronghold of Florida, Fort Caroline, he changed the name of the river to coincide with the renamed fort, that of San Mateo. This particular name was of longer duration, for even on British maps it was referred to as such.

A Spanish map of 1724 labelled it the San Juan, and from this time dates the modern derivation of the name, although John Mitchell referred to it alternately as the St. Juan and the Rio de St. Matheo as late as 1755. A more elaborate term was affixed by F. Munoz in 1765 when it appeared on his map as the Rio de St. Juan alias de Salamatoto. This apparently was too cumbersome a thing for practicality, and coupled with the transfer of ownership of Florida to the British, the term St. Johns River appeared on

the Bracquire map in 1763.

In 1767 the "South Carolina Gazette" contained an article referring to Governor Grant's sailing up the "St. John's"(note the apostrophe), and another South Carolina paper, the "Charlestown Gazette", told of Denys Rolle's embarking from that city to his plantation on the "St. Juan's River" on September 21, 1769.

After Spain re-obtained possession of Florida, "St. Juan's" was used again, not deviating from what appeared to be a precedent already established. When in 1821, Florida became a territory of the United States, the use of "St. John's" was applied. Subsequently, the apostrophe was dropped, and the present use of "St. Johns" is one of apparent permanence.<sup>1</sup>

The river played a tremendous role in the development of Palatka, but for economic and geographic reasons, its significance has declined, as has that of many rivers, since the expansion of the railroad. Today, the value of the river lies in its attraction as a recreational resource, with commercial activity assuming a lesser role. Seldom is the Memorial Bridge at Palatka raised more than fifty times per month to accommodate river traffic, and many of these openings are accounted for by the passage of larger privately owned craft.

The real heyday of the river's importance dates to the quarter century from 1875 to 1900 when hundreds of vessels of all sizes and power plied the river. At Palatka the St. Johns loses

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert M. Corse, "Names of the St. Johns River," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXI No. 2 (October, 1942).



its broad, lake-like characteristics; above Devil's Elbow it narrows considerable, with an attendant decrease in depth, as well as the fact that its course becomes a challenge to pilots due to the many bends and multiple channels which shift constantly with the change of season, especially attributed to the fluctuation in rainfall which has an obvious effect on the rate and amount of flow.

The Seminoles referred to it as the "Welaka," which, translated literally means, "broad water." Below Palatka, it appears to be more of a chain of lakes than a river, and its breadth is somewhat reflected in the number of bridges crossing it; only at Palatka and Green Cove Springs are any spans interrupting navigation south of Jacksonville, and the latter is of fixed nature, limiting the size of vessel that can navigate beneath it.

One of the first white men known to venture up the St. Johns was the Frenchman Laudionniere, who in 1564 travelled some sixty leagues to a point beyond Lake George. He mentioned no specific Indian village, although those natives he encountered were friendly. Laudionniere was seeking precious metals, and was encouraged by Indians who gave him reports of gold and silver mines in the interior of the peninsula, all of which was nominally Indian territory.<sup>2</sup> Thirty leagues from Mathiaquia (near Fort Caroline) Laudionniere referred to Drayton Island as the "Isle of Edelano," later a holding of Zepaniah Kingsley.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Charles E. Bennett, Laudonniere and Fort Caroline (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964).

<sup>3</sup>Sidney Lanier, Florida, Its Scenery, Climate and History (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Company, 1876).

Commercialism was not introduced to the area by Mr. Kingsley however. The first large scale agricultural operation that Palatka witnessed was due to the efforts of one Denys Rolle, an Englishman of noble blood, who in 1765 established his settlement for both economic and humanitarian reasons.

### III. ROLLESTOWN

Rollestown was an experiment in commercialism and humanitarianism during the brief English occupancy of Florida undertaken by an adventurer who was also an expert agriculturalist. He had one shortcoming, however, failing to understand that all people were simply not of his caliber of men.

Denys Rolle's plantation centered on what is now the property of the Florida Power and Light Company on the right bank of the St. Johns a mile or so above Palatka, immediately across from Devil's Elbow. It has been referred to as, among other names: Charlottenburgh; Charlotta (after Queen Charlotte, wife to George the Third); Mt. Pleasant; and Rollestown, spelled with several variations such as Rollstown and Rawlstown.<sup>1</sup>

Britain assumed ownership of Florida in 1763 as a result of the Treaty of Paris ending the Seven Years War, or, as it was known in this country, the French and Indian War. Almost immediately a rush for grants of land ensued, among which two were of special significance: that of Dr. Turnbull at Smyrna, and that of Denys Rolle.

There is some speculation relative to who physically established Rollestown, Denys or his son John. The father was born in 1725 in Devonshire County, England, and in 1748 married Ann

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<sup>1</sup>Charles L. Mowat, "The Tribulations of Denys Rolle," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXIII No. 1 (July 1, 1944) p. 1.

Chicester of Devon. John was born in 1750, and this argues against his assuming managerial responsibility although John Lee Williams gives the son credit, despite the age of the boy. At any rate, Denys was rather well off financially and attempted his first enterprise in the New World in 1764 in Georgia. According to one account he went so far as to establish a colony on the Altamaha River and another on Cumberland Island, but these failed because the British Board of Trade refused to acknowledge his claims, so Rolle looked south to the newly acquired Florida Territory. He applied for and received 40,000 acres near St. Marks, at Apalatchi, according to William Bartram, and was in the process of relocating when he was forced into the haven of the St. Johns by a storm. Interested in what he initially observed, he ventured up the river to Devil's Elbow and decided to settle there.<sup>2</sup> Another account relates that he sailed in steerage to St. Augustine in 1764, arriving there in September. Perhaps his class of travel indicates the adventurous nature of the man. He then toured the valley of the St. Johns for five months, from September 1764 to February 1765.<sup>3</sup>

Once the decision to settle in the valley was made, the next step involved applying for a grant of land. Corse's account, the most complete, refers to the aspiring planter's building cabins on the more desirable locations along the river.

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<sup>2</sup>Charles Bohnenberger, "The Settlement of Charlotta," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. IV No. 1 (July, 1925) p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Carita Doggett Corse, "Denys Rolle and Rollestown, A Pioneer for Utopia," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VII No. 2 (October, 1928) p. 117.

Rolle returned to St. Augustine, the seat of government in East Florida, and petitioned Governor Grant for validation of the claims he made. The governor told him the claims "must be contiguous" so Rolle referred to De Brahm's map, the first made by a British surveyor. He applied for land on both banks of the river, but this was refused.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile Grant, apparently a friend, deviated other English settlers from the valley while Rolle returned to England to argue his case. Colonial Secretary Hillsborough ultimately gave Rolle 20,000 of the 100,000 acres requested on condition. If the initial 20,000 acres were settled within two years he would then be given another 20,000 and so on until he realized his original request. Other terms required him to settle his claim with White Protestants, one per each one hundred acres. A quit-rent of one-half penny per acre was to be paid within ten years as well.<sup>5</sup>

It was difficult obtaining pioneer settlers. Only the dregs of London were even remotely interested in settling in the newly acquired land. In 1767, Rolle succeeded in bringing only forty-nine persons to Florida.<sup>6</sup> Life was demanding. Rolle was the only white settler above Picolata (which reflects on the success of Governor Grant in keeping competition out of the valley of the lack of interest in it). The Indians were not overly anxious about having Englishmen as neighbors either, although Rolle later said he'd had no difficulty with them.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

The colonies balked at the conditions they faced and refused to work, although they were promised half of what they grew. Nevertheless, they refused to clear the palmetto scrub so as to cultivate fields. Rolle countered by refusing to feed them, and several fled to St. Augustine where they appealed to the governor about their situation. They were ultimately transported to other colonies in an attempt to keep adverse word about conditions in Florida to a minimum. Not learning his lesson, Rolle brought over more of the same type of individual. In 1779, eighty-nine settlers landed at Charleston bound for Florida, but they all ran away before reaching Florida.

Rolle didn't spend all of his time in Florida; much of his effort was directed from England, which supports Williams' opinion about the son John assuming much of the responsibility for developing the grant. Hired overseers were used; in 1770, one sold over a thousand head of Rolle's cattle, the largest herd in Florida, without the owner's knowledge. He absconded with the funds.

Part of the problem derived from the humanitarianism of Rolle. Most of the two to three hundred colonists he brought over were wayward females from the slums of London. John Lee Williams referred to them as ". . . nearly three hundred miserable females, who were picked up about the purlieus of London."<sup>7</sup> Another account referred to them as the "penitent prostitutes."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>John Lee Williams, The Territory of Florida (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962) p. 118.

<sup>8</sup>John Miller, A Voyage to the Spanish Main (London: W. Smith, 1819) p. 153.

They lacked the fortitude for the demands of the frontier, not only physically, but morally as well. Eventually Rolle realized that his investments (ultimately a total of 23,000 pound sterling) was destined to be lost unless he corrected the situation. As a result, he resorted to the use of Negro labor and restocked the plantation with cattle, hogs, and sheep and returned to Florida to take charge himself, and to fight the rebels to the north.<sup>9</sup> His idea regarding the latter was to outfit a privateer, but he was more active in supporting loyalist refugees from the colonies.

In 1778 he invested 12,000 pound sterling, much of which went into the acquisition of more land. He built his empire up to 80,000 acres and had a widely diversified operation. Products of the plantation included cotton, animal products, citrus products (in one year, one thousand gallons of orange juice was exported) and forest products. Ships were able to virtually tie up to the bank on the east side of the river; the water was deep enough to accommodate ocean going vessels and great planks bridged the gap between bank and deck. Virtually all of Rolle's productivity was returned to England.

The village itself was quite large, and built with much planning in regard to lots, streets, and proximity to fields. The largest structure was a two storied affair which boasted five sash type windows in 1782. A church and a house for the clergyman also existed. The area around the village was sectioned off in ten acre plots, each of which had an office building and quarters for the workers adjacent to it. These plots

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<sup>9</sup>Corse, op cit., p. 121.

had space available for private gardens as well. Rolle introduced a concept not unlike the kolkhoz, or commune.

In 1766, Dr. William Stork, a resident of St. Augustine, journeyed up the St. Johns. He referred to several settlements along the bank of the river in the vicinity of Palatka, but made no mention of an Indian village on the present site of the city. Among other stops, he delayed at Picolata, Spaulding's trading store some distance up the river, and Rollestown.

Rolle had other visitors, one of whom preferred to remain anonymous, but related an interview with Rolle which was published in London in 1766 under the title "An Abstract of a letter from an eminent planter in South Carolina to a Noble Lord in England" dated August 27, 1765 in Charleston. This traveller virtually paralleled Stork's route, and he too failed to mention an Indian village, indicating there was none on the site.

The interview reflects the planning and foresight Rolle put into his dream. He observed that those coming as immigrants to East Florida with fifty guineas could expect to allot this as indicated in Table Two.

This totalled twenty guineas. The remaining thirty would be used for various and sundry purchases such as wages for indentured servants or purchase of slaves. Those with only twenty guineas ". . . will have all the above conveniences, but must depend entirely upon themselves for labour."<sup>10</sup> This also entitles the purchaser to one town lot and one five acre lot to work.

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<sup>10</sup>Dr. William Stork, An Extract from the Account of East Florida (London, 1766) p. 34.



TABLE 2

ROLLE'S FIFTY GUINEA BUDGET<sup>a</sup>

Item	Pound Sterling	Shilling	Pence
Passage from England to Florida	6		
Bedding	1	6	$\frac{1}{2}$
Kitchen & household furniture	1	9	$\frac{6}{12}$
Carpenter tools	1	17	7
Husbandry tools	2	7	5
Hunting & fishing equipment	1	18	$\frac{11}{12}$
Provisions for six months	3	12	$\frac{1}{2}$
Livestock	2	3	$\frac{4}{12}$
Seeds		5	8

<sup>a</sup>Dr. William Stork, An Extract from the Account of East Florida (London, 1766) p. 34.

Lest those without twenty guineas be discouraged from emigrating, Rolle devised a plan that would require an outlay of only twelve guineas for a year's subsistence in East Florida. They ". . . will be contented with the bare necessities by which persons may cultivate the land, and by industry raise themselves, the following schedule is adopted."<sup>11</sup> See Table 3.

Interestingly, passage and provisions are equal for the two plans which indicates similar quarters for different classes. The "Twelve Guinea Plan" also provided the individual with the town lot and farming lot.

A third plan accommodated those without any finances. Rolle established a period of indenture which lasted four years. He signed the above on September 1, 1766.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

TABLE 3

ROLLE'S TWELVE GUINEA BUDGET<sup>a</sup>

Item	Pound Sterling	Shilling	Pence
Passage	6		
Hammock		2	6
Sheets, two pair		9	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Four yards of ticking for a bed			
One yard for a bolster		7	6
Indian blanket (one)		4	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Iron crock (one)		2	1
Tubol		2	10
Spade		2	10
Hoe		1	10
Handsaw		5	
Axe		2	
Hook (fishing)		1	4
Provisions for six months	3	12	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sow (one)		12	
Seed corn		5	1 $\frac{1}{2}$

<sup>a</sup>Dr. William Stork, An Extract from the Account of East Florida (London, 1766) p. 35.

The early enthusiasm waned considerably by the time the settlement was twelve years old. The idealistic humanitarianism failed; the economic dream faded. Rolle must have known that he was doomed to failure, but perhaps couldn't reconcile himself into giving up. It was a decision he didn't have to make for himself because Britain divested herself of Florida in 1785. Now having a legitimate excuse, Rolle pulled out, lock, stock and barrel. He chartered a vessel for five hundred guineas and in two trips moved everything: slaves, buildings, stock, equipment and implements. Forty-five slaves died on the journey to his new center of operations on the Isle of Exuma, in the Bahamas. Many more apparently suffered ill effects, because he

referred to only one-third of his Negroes as being "taskable."<sup>12</sup>

Thus ended one of the two major colonial attempts on the part of the British during their brief occupancy of Florida. It also saw the end of the largest single commercial undertaking for some time to come. The men continued to come, and because each had to rely on the river for life, its importance became that much more obvious. It was significant that Rolle chose his site where he did.<sup>13</sup> The man realized that if he located any further south, he would have to cope with infinitely more difficult transportation problems, namely, a break in transportation so as to funnel the products of his undertaking out to the market. Rollestown marks the change in physical appearance of the St. Johns. Other ventures since Rolle's have been undertaken there for the same reason.

Why the east bank of the river? The west bank was considered to be Indian domain and therefore inviolable, although enterprise did exist on the west side of the St. Johns. More important however, the stream served as a natural defense barrier. It was difficult to cross the St. Johns due to its breadth. Economically, the overland route to St. Augustine was more feasible, and the current gouged out a deep channel immediately adjacent to Rollestown. This meant that only a minimum

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<sup>12</sup>Carita Doggett Corse, "Florida History: A Field of Colorful Original Sources," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. VI No. 1 (July, 1927) p. 39.

<sup>13</sup>Rollestown was also the site of an old Indian village dating to the period 1500 to 400 B.C.

amount of funds had to be appropriated for the building of docks and pers. Had Denys Rolle been born thirty years later, Rollestown could very well be more than an historic marker today.

#### CHAPTER IV. DEVELOPMENT OF THE VALLEY

The British Era in Florida History marked a great increase in settlement of the area referred to as East Florida, roughly, from the St. Marys River on the north to Rollestown on the south, and from the St. Johns on the west to the Atlantic on the east.

From 1764 to 1770, two hundred and twenty-seven Orders in Council were issued for land grants totalling 2,856,000 acres.<sup>1</sup> The more prominent plantations south of Black Creek are listed below with the number of acres involved in each grant.

The English conducted the most thorough survey to date during their ownership. William Gerard DeBrahm was the official surveyor of the Southern District of America. He began his work June 26, 1764, and completed his survey in 1772. His work included some comment relative to the geography of the valley:

The land on the North and West of the Stream is all laid out in private Properties as far as the Okleywahaw River, and on the South and East side as far South as to the Head of St. Juan's Stream. . . . This Stream is famous for Mollets, which come down from Spawning every year in such a Quantity, that they take in one-tenth of the Stream, they being met at Flood time by the Bass and Porpoises jumping by thousands on the dry Banks of the Stream perish rather than become a Prey to their Enemies.(Sic.)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Loch Mowat, East Florida as a British Province, 1763--1784 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964) p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>William Gerard DeBrahm, History of the Three Provinces: South Carolina, Georgia and East Florida, Manuscript Collection (Cambridge: University of Harvard).

TABLE 4  
 VALLEY SETTLERS: THE BRITISH ERA<sup>a</sup>

Owner (north to south)	Number of Acres
<b>West Bank:</b>	
Patrick Tonin	20,000
Nooney and Frayes	20,000
William Mills	20,000
J. Crisp	15,000
James Bryant	500 (with house)
Joshua Gray	1,500 (with house) (Palatka)
Henry Middleton	6,000
Earl of Moira	20,000
Spaulding's Indian Store	
J. Tucker	20,000
Oglewaha Creek	
J. Fortry	10,000
J. Morris	5,000
<b>East Bank: (Beginning with the) Remains of Dapuppo Fort</b>	
J. Cullinder	1,000 (with house)
Captain C. Rainsford	(Sawmill, house)
Nathaniel Jackson	5,000
Picolata Fort	
Captain H. Hunt	10,000 (house)
Reverend Forbes	1,000
Jos. Wilson	10,000
Colonel Wm. Taylor	5,000
Dennis Rolle	10,000 (homes)
Henlough	1,000 (house)
Lord Adam Gordon	20,000
Richard Pratt	10,000
J. Tucker	500

<sup>a</sup>Maps received from George Cole Scott, Richmond, Virginia,"  
Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. V No. 2 (October, 1927).

DeBrahm also conducted a census in conjunction with his survey. White males numbered two hundred and eighty-eight, and about nine hundred Negroes were estimated to have resided in East Florida at the time of his poll.

In keeping with her colonial development of the New World, the British brought considerable more permanence to the area than did her predecessors who were primarily interested in gold and silver. She defined the area of her occupance and that of the Indian at Picolata in 1765. British East Florida was bounded on the north by the St. Marys River, by the St. Johns on the west, and on the south by a line drawn from the mouth of the Oklawaha to the Atlantic Ocean.

Her policy of granting large areas of land in an effort to stimulate development and to attract Englishmen to a country primarily Spanish and Catholic paid off. James Spaulding established three stores along the bank, two of which were above Palatka. The first paper in East Florida was the East Florida Gazette, established in St. Augustine in 1783. In that same year, the trading firm of Panton and Leslie bought out Spaulding (who moved to Georgia) and enjoyed a monopoly of the fur trade with the Indians. Panton's largest operation was referred to as the "lower store" just south of Lake George, operated by John Hambly.<sup>3</sup>

Much of the Panton, Leslie operation involved the raising of cattle on a large scale. Most of these were sold to the Spanish who remained in the area, and as a result, when Spain

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<sup>3</sup>Helen Hornbeck Tanner, Zespedes in East Florida, 1784--1790 (Miami: University of Miami Press, 1903) p. 87.

once again secured Florida, Panton and Leslie was the only significant trading firm of non-Spanish origin to remain in the territory. In April of 1788 the firm was given a new, more lucrative contract.

East Florida thrived under British rule; when Spain re-assumed control there were some ten thousand Englishmen in the province. The last fifteen hundred of these departed Florida in September of 1785. The population dropped then to only three thousand inhabitants. Some British influence remained however, even if only in name. Rollestown has been mentioned, but also in the area are places such as Drayton's Island, named for William Drayton, a Chief Justice during the British Era.<sup>4</sup>

Development of the area instigated several naturalists to tou the valley and relate their observations to the general public in another attempt to draw attention to the new province in the empire.

Bernard Romans was one of these. He came to Florida in 1760 as a surveyor, not staying in the area permanently however. His more penetrating observations include his reflections on Rolle's efforts. The St. Johns ". . . is from one and one-half to three miles wide, except at the house of Mr. Rolle, who has here made an odd attempt towards settling and making an estate in as completely a sandy desert as can be found. . . ." <sup>5</sup> Romans toured the area with an Indian guide who obviously assisted him

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>Bernard Romans, A Concise History of East and West Florida (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962) p. 35.



in his understanding of the valley.

The traveller left the river and crossed overland to West Florida, relying in part on the old Indian and Spanish Trail from St. Augustine to "Appalachia." He noted the ruins of Forts "Papa" and Picolata, both just south of Green Cove Springs and on opposite banks of the river.

The exact location of Fort Picolata has as yet to be determined. It has been described as being constructed of stones carried from Anastasia Island, and also having a tower some thirty feet high.<sup>6</sup> Fort St. Francis de Pupa was directly across the river on the west bank about five miles downstream from Green Cove Springs. Its remains, earthworks, can be seen to this day.

Romans at best was an adventurer and his reflections are not always accurate. He later partook in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga, and knew Paul Revere, employing him as an engraver for the plates of his Florida maps, actually Romans' best contribution. President Monroe appointed him United States Marshal for East and West Florida on May 18, 1821. More optimistic then, he referred to the St. Johns as ". . . likely to become second to none in North America, except the Mississippi."<sup>7</sup> He was to be justified in his optimism, but only for a short period in the history of Ylacco.

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<sup>6</sup>James Grant Forbes, Sketches, Historical and Topographical of the Floridas (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964) p. 81.

<sup>7</sup>Romans, op. cit., p. 76.

An internationally known team of naturalists also spent considerable time touring the new province. John and William Bartram, father and son, ventured into the valley for the first time in 1765, and William returned several years later, alone on the latter occasion.

The Bartrams were Quakers from Philadelphia. The father, a botanist with gardens in that city, was famed for his work throughout the empire. William took a liking to his father's profession, accompanying him as early as 1754, at the age of fourteen, on an expedition into the Catskills. Other expeditions preceded the tour into the St. Johns country.

Governor Grant subsidized the first trip from St. Augustine to the extent of 25 pound sterling.<sup>8</sup> The party departed on December 19, 1765, setting out for the mouth of the river and the home of one Greenwood, near present day Jacksonville. The next day they moved upriver to the homestead of Robert Davis who joined the party with one of his Negroes (to work and row) and a Mr. Yates. All toured in one dugout called a "battoe."<sup>9</sup>

Part of John Bartram's personal account has been preserved in a publication by Dr. William Stork, who toured the valley in 1769, between the two Bartram ventures. His most favorable observation was that the land above Picolata for forty miles along

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<sup>8</sup>Mowat, p. 40.

<sup>9</sup>Helen Gere Cruinckshank (ed.), John and William Bartram's America (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1957) p. 54.

the river is ". . .as good swamp, or rice land, as any in Carolina."<sup>10</sup> This account supports the contention that the Bartrams were most thorough in their efforts, and also tempers the thought that the journey was one of extensive effort on the part of those individuals involved.

John Bartram recorded temperature fluctuations on a daily basis (the account encompasses the period of time from December 19, 1765, when the party left St. Augustine, to February 21, 1766, when they returned to Fort Pupo). One of the first delays was at the Robert Davis plantation where, on December 21, they had to spend an extra day because of high winds; the temperature however, was 74 degrees. The wind held, as did the temperature on the twenty-second, but the party embarked anyway, travelling only a few miles on the first day.

On the twenty-fifth, John and William probably stopped at present-day Palatka. The journal noted a temperature of 46 degrees, and

. . .after several miles of choice swamps near the river, landed at a point of high ground, an ancient plantation, either Indian or Spaniards. There were live oaks two feet in diameter and plenty of orange trees. The ground rose from a swamp on the right. Shortly after (we) arrived at Squire Roll's (situated) on a bluff seventeen feet high.<sup>11</sup>

There they met a Mr. Banks, a caretaker for Rolle, who apparently made them welcome for the next several entries refer

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<sup>10</sup>Dr. William Stork, A Description of East Florida (London: W. Nicoll, 1769).

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

to an excursion up Gray's Creek some eight miles upriver. The creek was sixty yards wide and two and one-half fathoms deep; they rowed up a distance of seven miles. Two days later, they stopped at Spaulding's lower store (near Stokes Landing) then continued up the river to an elevated point of land near Johnson's Springs. The surrounding land was very swampy and characterized by other springs as well. Bartram later referred to this as Six Mile Creek, now Salt Springs. Without dallying, the group continued up to Lake Harney reaching that point on January 13, 1766, probably the first Europeans to travel so far up the river.<sup>12</sup>

The expedition then turned around and headed back down the river, this time stopping at Johnson's Springs once again to more fully explore the vicinity and to attempt to find the main source of flow. They discovered a field which they attributed to be an old Indian grove and then found the main spring complex, ". . . a prodigious quantity of very clear, warm, brackish water boiled up between vast rocks of unknown depth. We could not reach the bottom with a very long pole."<sup>13</sup>

That the Bartrams were most efficient observers can be ascertained by their own account of Mount Royal, the site of an old Indian village south of Palatka at the lower end of Lake George.

They next went to Mount Royal, arriving about noon on

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

January 25.

(The party discovered an) . . . Indian tumulus, which was about 100 yards in diameter, nearly round, and near twenty foot high; found some bones scattered on it. It must be ancient, as there are live oaks growing upon it three foot in diameter. (Sic)<sup>14</sup>

What a prodigious multitude of Indians must have labored to raise it. To what height we can't say, as it must have settled much in such a number of years, and it is surprising where they brought the sand from, and how, as they had nothing but baskets or bowls to carry it in. There seems to be a little hollow near the adjacent level on one side, though not likely to raise such a tumulus the 50th part of what it is. But directly north from the tumulus is a fine straight avenue about sixty yards broad, all the surface of which has been taken off and thrown on each side. This makes a bank of about a rod wide and a foot high, more or less, as the unevenness of the ground required, for the avenue is as level as a floor from bank to bank, and continues so far about three quarters of a mile to a pond of about 100 yards broad and 150 long north and south, which seemed to be an oblong square. Its banks, four foot perpendicular, gradually slope everyway to the water, the depth of which we could not say, but do not imagine it deep, as the grass grows all over it. By its regularity it seems to be artificial; if so, perhaps sand was carried from hence to raise the tumulus, as the one directly faces the other end of the avenue.

Here had formerly been a large Indian town; I suppose there are fifty acres of planting ground cleared and of a middling soil, a good part of which is mixed with small shells. No doubt this large tumulus was their burying place or sepulcher. (Sic)<sup>15</sup>

Four days later the Bartrams, still continuing downstream, stayed at Rollestown and again in their own words:

Walked all about the town and adjacent woods. Near the banks of the river are the remains of an old Spanish entrenchment, twelve yards one way and fourteen the other, about five foot high, three sides being open to the river. The town is half a mile long, with half a score of scattered houses in it; built of round logs. The streets are laid out at right angles; one of them is 100 foot broad, the other sixty. The landback is all pine and scrub oaks. The bluff continues half a mile

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

down the river, which is seven fathom deep near the town, but towards the opposite shore there is a sand bar. It is not above half a mile wide here, but soon widens above.<sup>16</sup>

The party left Rolle's on the morning of January 30, 1766.

Once again they stopped in the Palatka area, although probably further down river; Bartram made note of a vast orange grove ". . . where thousands of orange trees grow as thick as possible, some four miles overland from Mr. Rolles, although nearer eight miles by water."<sup>17</sup> By February 17 the group reached Picolata and the next day they crossed to the west bank and explored "Popa" Fort, describing it as ". . . a small shallow entrenchment filled up with the length of time some twenty yards square twenty yards back from the river."<sup>18</sup> A few yards inland from this first fortification was another, "twice as big." The whole area was covered with orange and live oak, two to three feet in diameter.

Upon returning to the north, John wrote a friend, Peter Colluism, that he'd left his son "Billy" in Florida. The lad was so impressed with what he saw in the valley that he secured an indigo plantation on the river six miles above Picolata.<sup>19</sup> He continued his work, which was specifically defined by the Indians who called him "Puc-Puggy," the Flower-Hunter.<sup>20</sup>

The next Bartram venture up the valley reflects the boy's

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>The venture eventually proved to be an economic failure.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 241.

efforts at study during the period of time between the two excursions. A Doctor John Fothergill of London financed his second venture in September, 1772. William set out from Savannah in March of 1774, for "Cow-ford," a public ferry on the St. Johns River (Jacksonville). Here he purchased, for three guineas, "a neat little sailboat," and in mid-April, began his journey.

One of his first interesting observations was his description of Fort Picolata, now deserted and dismantled. Evidence of the thirty foot tower still remained however; the square tower had been surrounded by a breast-high wall, without bastions, and was marked uniformly by loopholes for weapons. A moat surrounded the entire structure. The upper story was open on the inside and there were cupolas on the roof which housed eight four-pounders, two on each side of the fort which was constructed of tabby.<sup>21</sup>

Bartram crossed and recrossed the river usually on a day to day basis. On occasion the elements forced him to seek sanctuary in protected waters, and similiarly, the wildlife of the vicinity did likewise. He mentioned ". . . incredible numbers of small insects. . . ." <sup>22</sup> and ". . . numbers of alligators, some of them of an enormous size. . . ." <sup>23</sup>

None of the observers prior to William Bartram's journey mentioned anything regarding a settlement of any kind on the present site of Palatka, and apparently a rather sizeable village

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<sup>21</sup>Francis Harper (ed.), The Travels of William Bartram, Naturalists' Edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957) p. 52.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

relocated there between Bartram's visits. He rounded Forrester's Point and came upon a large oval shaped bay, bordered on the west by a low cypress swamp and marshland. Just beyond was an Indian village located in a ". . . fine situation. . . ."; the bank rose gradually and eight or ten habitations in a row fronted the water". . . about fifty yards distance from it."<sup>24</sup>

There was activity in the village; some naked youths were fishing in hip-deep water using a rod and line. Others, younger, were shooting frogs with bow and arrow.

As I approached, the smaller fled to some women hoeing corn. The stouter youth stood their ground, smiling, and called to me. As I passed along I saw some elderly folk, reclining on skins on the ground in front of the houses. They arose and eyed me as I passed, but perceiving that I kept on without stopping, they resumed their former positions. They were civil, and appeared to be happy in their situation.<sup>25</sup>

Bartram noted an orange grove with large well-kept trees at the upper end of the village, and several hundred acres of cleared land about the settlement. He defined, among other crops, beans, corn, melons, squashes, and tobacco.

Immediately upstream, the river narrowed to a half mile in width, but very deep. On the east bank was Rollestown. The bank was some fifteen or twenty feet high with an almost perpendicular slope, and the town spread along the river for nearly half a mile. Bartram stopped here, and apparently spent some time in the town, for he made some rather blunt observations about Rolle's operation. He added credence to Williams' version of how Rolle was introduced

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.



to the valley by relating the incident of the storm reputedly blowing Rolle off course into the St. Johns. He went on to say that due to an ". . . ill concerted plan . . . , negligence, or extreme parsimony in sending proper recruits, and other necessities, together with a bad choice of citizens, the settlement by degrees grew weaker, and length totally fell to the ground."<sup>26</sup>

Bartram noted that many of the buildings of Rollestown were already decaying, the mansion being in the best repair. It was built of cypress and was inhabited by an overseer and his family. A blacksmith also resided a short distance away. Bartram did not hold Rolle's choice of land in high esteem either, for he referred to the best piece of land in the grant lying on Dunn's Creek and Lake, ". . . fit for the growth of Rice."<sup>27</sup>

He also established that this latter area was once the site of a large Indian settlement, basing this observation on large numbers of conically shaped mounds of earth and shells. Just upriver, on Murphy's Island, was a trading post. It was part of the chain still operated by James Spaulding, the main store being located at Stokes Landing, six miles above Palatka on the west bank of the river. This was Spaulding's "lower store," some one hundred yards due west of the current pier.<sup>28</sup>

Spaulding was entertaining the idea of expanding his operation by three more similiar facilities, the upper store just above Lake George, and in the interior near Alachua and Apalachi.

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 353.

Bartram determined to visit all of these sites. He ventured to Alachua for about ten days, then returned to the valley. In May, in a letter to his father, he referred to continuing his journey up the river for several weeks before he again crossed overland to the interior. This excursion upriver was to include several of the traders, inasmuch as they were going to establish a new trading post. The vessel they used was somewhat larger than that of Bartram's, and he obviously enjoyed the company. They passed the Tucker indigo plantation which was just above Mount Hope (named by John Bartram on the 1766 journey) and travelled to Mount Royal before stopping. There, they met a man named Kean who had been an Indian trader. Mount Royal had also been the site of an old Indian village. It was characterized by the ever-present mound, "a large orange grove" and a "noble Indian highway."<sup>29</sup> The grove was not kept; current attention emphasized the production of corn, cotton and indigo. Bartram was pleased with the "taste" of the proprietor, for the mound was still intact.

Several miles upriver was Lake George, a "dilatation of the river St. Juan" and its several islands. Bartram and company were forced by a brisk west wind to seek shelter on Drayton Island which Bartram referred to as "Isle Edelano." They encamped on the south shore on a promontory where an "excellent harbour" was found. The island ". . . appears to have once been the chosen residence of an Indian prince . . ." for there was a ". . . pompous Indian mount or conical pyramid of earth . . ." set back

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

from the shore.<sup>30</sup> There was no evidence of present human habitation, but ". . . great numbers of deer, turkeys, bears, wolves, wildcats, squirrels, raccoons, and opossums . . . ."were seen.<sup>31</sup>

The next day the wind subsided and the party crossed the lake. They encountered a smaller island, nearly perfectly round, which has since been engulfed by the advancing delta of the river as it dumped into the lake. Bartram called it the "Isle of Palms." After encamping that night, the group reached the upper store where Bartram spent several weeks, probably poking around what is now Astor, five miles south of the Lake. At this store was a trader who had an Indian wife, a handsome young Seminole, daughter of White Captain, a Seminole chief. The trader apparently was not happy ". . . in his connection with his beautiful savage. . . ." He was a North Carolinian, a "genteel, well-bred man" according to Bartram.<sup>32</sup>

The trip up the river was not yet over. Bartram set out again, penetrating as far south as Blue Springs, and visited the Turnbull colony. On the return trip, he stopped again at the upper store, this time meeting one Job Wiggins, a planter from downriver. He continued his journey alone north of the store and returned to the spring he'd been impressed with on the earlier journey, Salt Springs. Here he found an:

. . . enchanting and amazing crystal fountain, which incessantly threw up, from dark, rocky caverns below, tons of

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

water every minute. . . the waters are thrown up in such abundance and amazing force, as to jet and swell up two or three feet above the common surface. . . .<sup>33</sup>

The fountain contained six sources in a forty yard area. In 1788 another traveller named Michaux reported a gush of more than half a foot. In 1940 the gush was not more than ". . . a couple of inches."<sup>34</sup>

The remainder of the trip downriver was repetitious. He stopped at virtually the same places as on the southern trek and eventually at the home of Kean, whom he'd met at the upper store. Several days later he left the valley, and went to the interior in the company of four men who were going to ". . . treat with the cowkeeper and other chiefs of Cuscowilla."<sup>35</sup>

In general his course wended west through Rodman, crossing Deep Creek near the site of the present bridge. This puts him roughly on the trail from Deep Creek to Kenwood, some two and one-half to three miles to the west. Later, the Ocklawaha Valley Railroad was to parallel, in part, this route. They passed alternately through wet and dry savanna, noticed many lizards, snakes, scorpions, and great herds of deer, ". . . myriads of fish, . . . flocks of turkeys. . . and. . . vultures and ravens."<sup>36</sup> Cowpens Lake, or Halfway Pond, was also a stopover point for the travellers;

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>34</sup>Harper states that Samuel Taylor Coleridge drew on Bartram's account of Salt Spring for his sacred river "Alph" in "Kubla Khan." Ibid., pp. 362-363.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 114.

they encamped ". . . just by the little cape of flat rocks."<sup>37</sup>  
 The next day, they resumed their travels ". . . through the  
 forests of Cuscowilla . . . ." <sup>38</sup> and in noting his reference to  
 the higher sand ridges, his progress places him near Hawthorne,  
 just north of Watson's prairie in Alachua County.

The Cuscowilla Indians moved south from the Oconee River  
 valley early in the eighteenth century. Under Cowkeeper, part  
 of the tribe left the Chattahoochee River area for Alachua where  
 Bartram met them. After being received graciously by Cowkeeper,  
 Bartram retraced his steps to the St. Johns Valley and the lower  
 store. Once again, in late July, he journeyed upriver to Lake  
 George, perhaps for one last look around. He again ventured to  
 Salt Springs before leaving the valley, this time stopping at  
 the deserted plantation of Dr. Stork. He deplored the British  
 practice of tearing out the orange groves so as to plant indigo,  
 corn, and cotton.

At the lower store for the last time, he encountered a  
 large band of Creeks, forty warriors who were ". . . destined  
 against the Choctaws of West Florida."<sup>39</sup> They had some one hun-  
 dred gallons of whiskey, and were partying it up. In Bartram's  
 terms:

In a few days this festival exhibited one of the most  
 ludicrous Bacchanalian scenes that is possible to be con-  
 ceived, white and red men and women without distinction,  
 passed the day merrily with these jovial, amorous tapers,

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

and the nights in convivial songs, dances, and sacrifices to Venus as long as they could stand or move . . . . "<sup>40</sup>

Long Warrior was the leader of the band. He insisted on blankets and shirts on a credit basis. McLatche, the trader in charge of the post, said he'd have to have Spaulding's approval for credit whereupon Long Warrior threatened to kill all the traders and take what he wanted. McLatche stood up to the Indian, saying that if the latter were so powerful, he could demonstrate this by striking down a huge nearby oak. The bluff was made, and the Indian backed down.<sup>41</sup>

In late September, Bartram and McLatche went to the village at the Palatka site for the feast of "Watermelons and Oranges." Bartram wrote, "We were received and entertained friendly by the Indians . . . ."<sup>42</sup> In the center of the village stood a square, defined by pillars or posts on each side which supported a canopy of thatched and woven palmetto. This shaded a raised platform, some two feet high, which was covered with ". . . curiously woven" carpets and mats of multi-colored split cane. Here the feast occurred; ". . . after smoking tobacco, baskets of choice fruits were brought and set before us."<sup>43</sup>

Still the observant naturalist, Bartram provides an overview of the agricultural activity of the village. In the fields surrounding the town, beans, corn, citruels, figs, oranges,

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 163.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

peaches, peas, potatoes, pumpkins and squashes were growing.<sup>44</sup>

Apparently this feast was one of Bartram's last events in the valley. Shortly, about the end of September, he gave his "trusty and fortunate bark" to Job Wiggins, whom he referred to as his ". . . travelling companion, interpreter, friend and benefactor."<sup>45</sup> He then set sail for Frederico, Georgia.

Bartram later attracted the attention of Thomas Jefferson, an agriculturalist, who asked him to accompany Lewis and Clark on their expedition beyond the Mississippi, but poor health prevented his taking part in that venture. He died in 1823 at the age of eighty-four years. His account of the valley is the best up to the time and even for fifty years to come, for with the close of British rule in Florida, the whole valley once again slumped into a state of economic doldrums.

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER V. THE SECOND SPANISH OCCUPANCE

In June of 1784, Vicente Manuel de Zespedes y Valasco and five hundred troops arrived at St. Augustine to take over the administration of East Florida. Several hundred governmental employees accompanied him on the trip from Havana, the great Spanish stronghold in the New World. Zespedes' tenure of office officially lasted from July 14, 1784, to July 7, 1790; he inherited a drastically depopulated province as a result of the British exodus, but attempted to cope with the situation as best he could.

During the third year of his governorship, Zespedes set out to tour his frontier; again man turned to the river. He failed to carry out the program to develop the valley by dredging the bar at the mouth of the St. Johns as had been advocated by an earlier Spanish governor, Manuel de Montiano, in 1750. The British were seriously considering the project when the Revolution broke out. Zespedes did nothing about it. He ventured forth in January, 1787, stopping at, among other places, the plantation of Francisco Fatio, New Switzerland, reputedly the finest in the valley. Fatio had three plantations on the river, having been in the valley since 1776. Upriver, he found very few individuals; twelve miles above Fatio's was Picolata; the old fort was still standing. Near the fort was the plantation of Bartram's guide, Job Wiggins, mulatto son of a free Negress, who had seventeen slaves working his several hundred acres. Wiggins also operated



a ferry as a service to Indians travelling to St. Augustine.<sup>1</sup>

Rollestown now was deserted. Zespedes noted that even the ". . . handsome sash windows . . ." <sup>2</sup> had been taken when the plantation was abandoned.

On the positive side, and further upriver, Zespedes could rejoice at Spaulding's old upper store, now operated by Panton and Leslie. The business had expanded tremendously since Bartram's visits. It included a packing house which handled hides and other agricultural products, most of which were sent to England in barrels; fifty to sixty Negro slaves; several hundred head of cattle; and several timber crews, which concentrated their attention on extracting tannin from bark for use in the leather industry. The store was operated by a man named Hambly when Zespedes reached it in February, 1787.

Zespedes was sixty-seven years old when he made the tour, but his age didn't prevent him from making some rather interesting observations. He reported the civilian population in the province as one thousand three hundred and ninety, nine hundred of whom were white. As a follow-up to his poll, he had a Father Hassett tabulate the population in 1788; in September the priest concluded his census, which excluded military personnel, and reported that seventeen hundred and twenty-nine persons resided in East Florida. One thousand and seventy-eight of these were white and the rest Negro, two hundred eighty-four of whom lived

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<sup>1</sup>Tanner, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

in St. Augustine.<sup>3</sup>

By way of contrast, 13,000 British Loyalists entered the province from 1778 to 1782.<sup>4</sup>

Zespedes was concerned about the frontier to the north, especially since virtually no Spaniards resided in that vicinity. He recommended to his successor, Juan Nepomuceno Quesade, that he keep on friendly terms with the Indians and also pay attention to the border. He feared that the frontier would be one day taken over by ". . . a wild sort of folk . . . ." he referred to as "crackers."<sup>5</sup> This was probably one of the first uses of that term.

He also was interested in the valley. He urged the establishment of more river ports, especially at the site of Wiggins' ferry. He acquired for Wiggins a stipend from the government in exchange for the services rendered travellers by his ferry operation.

On July 15, 1790, Zespedes returned once again to Havana, after a lackluster six years of governorship.

Zespedes' fears regarding the northern border were not unfounded. In 1792, by order of Governor Moore of South Carolina, an army descended into Florida to settle grievances with the Spanish. Moore attacked St. Augustine by sea, while Colonel Robert Daniel approached the town from Palatka, crossing overland with a force sufficient enough to set fire to the convent and

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 220.

church on October 22. The Spanish declared that "untold barbarities" had been committed, and that seven missionaries were murdered. The convent library was burned by order of Colonel Daniel, and much of the record collection of Spanish Florida was destroyed.<sup>6</sup>

The excursion of Moore and Daniels was only one of many which witnessed the violation of the sanctity of Spanish Florida by the neighbor to the north during the Second Spanish administration. This type of incident occurred with increasing frequency until Florida was annexed by the United States in 1821.

It antagonized the Indian also, and because of the inability of the Spanish to insure protection for settlers in the valley, another period of inactivity ensued. The St. Johns was not totally ignored however; many of the great land grants that show upon current maps date to the period of 1800 and after. These were registered later with the United States government in St. Augustine, and from the time of annexation dates the real opening of the valley as far as economic activity was concerned.

The Indian War, or the First Seminole War, witnessed the greatest battle between native and intruder in what is now Alachua County. The fight occurred near present-day Windsor and resulted in the death of the Seminole chief, Payne (after whom Payne's Prairie is named) and one hundred and seventeen of his warriors. Some of the force of Colonel Daniel Newnan (after

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<sup>6</sup>Charles H. Mohr, "St. Francis Barracks, S. A.; The Franciscans in Florida," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol VII No. 3 (January, 1929) p. 223.

whom Newnan's Lake is named) was comprised of valley residents, for in the September 12, 1912, issue of Niles' Register, a visitor noted that Zepaniah Kingsley's house on the St. Johns was ". . . handsomely decorated with Indian scalps."<sup>7</sup>

Sporadic raids comprised the conflict during the remainder of the Spanish era. At times the valley residents were forced to retreat to St. Augustine where the Castillo de San Marco offered the only protection from Indian depredations. What with the only real haven some thirty miles away, it is not difficult to point out the reason for a decline in activity in the valley until annexation of the territory in 1821.

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<sup>7</sup>T. Frederick Davis, "Digest of the Florida Material in Niles' Register, 1811--1849," Unpublished manuscript, Jacksonville, Florida, 1939, p. 26.

## CHAPTER VI. TERRITORIAL STATUS

Andrew Jackson's raids in Florida did little more than psychologically upset the valley residents, and in general they looked forward to closer ties to the northern neighbor as a means of achieving support for their personal plans. At St. Augustine on July 10, 1821, Colonel Robert Butler accepted the province of East Florida from the Spaniard Don Jose Coppinger, Colonel of the National Armies of South America. Two counties were organized, St. Johns in East Florida and Escambia in West Florida, with county seats at St. Augustine and Pensacola respectively.

Jackson was appointed the first provisional governor of the new territory and he arrived at Pensacola in June of 1821. Less than a year later territorial status was given Florida. On April 17, 1822, William P. DuVal of Kentucky was appointed the first territorial governor for a four year term. DuVal was chosen from six contenders, and arrived in Pensacola on June 20. He held the position for a total of twelve years.

Florida's annexation was not an overwhelmingly desired thing. Edward J. Coale wrote from Baltimore in 1821 that Floridians consisted of:

. . . a few people, not exceeding, it is believed, fifteen thousand, loitering in towns, wholly or nearly so, neglecting the advantages, both natural and adventitious, of their fine country have not originated nor accumulated a stock in money or commodities, to create a commerce to employ one half of those who will hasten to engage in it. If you are

going to East Florida, go as agriculturalists.<sup>1</sup>

Henry Clay apposed the annexation of Florida on the grounds that it was " . . . loaded and encumbered with land grants which leave scarcely a foot of soil for the United States."<sup>2</sup>

To an extent, Coale was correct. Florida had been for years a frontier, a haven for all sorts and types, criminals and deserters not excepted. In 1821 the territory consisted of only two population centers, the county seats referred to above. Nearly all activity was on a subsistence basis, with a few exceptions in the St. Johns Valley and in the area around Pensacola. In all fairness however, all frontiers have been characterized by a rough, and tumble atmosphere and environment. Florida, because of constant political instability, was perhaps somewhat more than typical and understandably so.

Almost immediately the presence of the United States Government was felt in Florida; during the winter of 1821--22 Captain LeConte, an engineer, penetrated to the head of the St. Johns River. A surveyor named Vignoles travelled the interior shortly after annexation, and William Hayne Simmons toured the valley from Picolata to Volusia. Simmons was accompanied by Horatio S. Dexter, a planter in the Volusia area who had " . . . long been a resident."<sup>3</sup> They reflected on many orange groves in the area downriver from Buffalo Bluff, but made no mention of an Indian

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<sup>1</sup>Edward J. Coale, An Original Memoir on the Floridas, (Baltimore: Richard J. Matchett, 1821) p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Sidney Walter Martin, Florida During the Territorial Days (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1944) p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>William Hayne Simmons, Notices of East Florida (Charleston: A. E. Miller, 1822) p. 23.

village such as Bartram visited. A Seminole village was located at Spring Garden some ten miles from Volusia, and bands of "Ocklewahaws" inhabited the shores of Lake Semfky, midway between Volusia and the Oklawaha River.

The Spanish made a considerable number of land grants in an attempt to develop the valley, but most of these existed on paper only, that is, there was little actual physical utilization of these grants. Almost all of the grants were presented to the United States land commissioners in St. Augustine who, among others, were W. H. Allen, William Bean, Davis Floyd and George Murray. The most active surveyor was George J. F. Clarke.

Many of the grants had changed hands from the time of the original claim until the current claimant presented his case to the board. John Perchman was the original claimant to 2000 acres on the Oklawaha and a survey was ordered of the property by the Spanish government in 1815. It was ceded by Mr. Estralgo, the Spanish land commissioner, to one Francis P. Sanchez. The area involved the south bank of the Oklawaha from its mouth to a point some two miles up that stream.<sup>4</sup>

On February 22, 1817, Gabriel W. Perpall submitted his claim for thirteen hundred and forty acres on Devil's Elbow, opposite Rollestown. It had been conceded by the Spaniard Coppinger in 1815 and was surveyed on April 15, 1818. The land was primarily swamp, but to the south was a cypress stand and to the northwest was higher land dominated by stands of pine.<sup>5</sup> The claim was

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<sup>4</sup>See General Highway Map, Putnam County, Florida (reprinted February, 1962).

<sup>5</sup>Simmons, p. 23.

later verified by the United States Board of Land Commissioners and the Congress of the United States.

All of the major claims in the Palatka vicinity were presented in 1824 and 1825. One of significance, that of Elihu Woodruff, was initially turned down by the board on April 20. Woodruff had noted that his claim was originally that of John Moore, dated under royal title November 9, 1805, for three hundred fifty acres. It had not been surveyed however. Woodruff petitioned the commissioners by virtue of the following on December 11, 1824:

To the honorable the commissioners appointed to ascertain claims and titles to lands in East Florida:

The petition of the subscribers respectfully showeth: that your memorialists claim title to a tract of land consisting of three hundred and fifty acres, situated on the river St. Johns, in the vicinity of a place called Rollestown, about six miles southward of the post of Buena Vista, bounded on the west by lands granted to a certain Clarkworthy; which title your memorialists derive from a title made to John Moore, a free colored man, by Governor White, in virtue of the royal order of October 29, 1790, who sold the same to your memorialists. They would state that the title to Moore bears date November 9, 1805, as appears by a certified copy thereof, herewith filed, marked A, and that he conveyed the same to your memorialists by his certain decl. dated upon the third day of May 1823; which deed is herewith exhibited, marked B. And your memorialists further show that they are in actual possession of the said lands; that they are citizens of the United States and residents of East Florida. All of which is respectfully submitted

Elihu Woodruff  
Sidney P. Harris  
James Maver

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<sup>6</sup>U.S., American State Papers; Public Lands, Vol. V  
(Washington: Duff Green, 1834) p. 648.



On October 26, 1825, the board acted favorably on this petition, with all members of the board in attendance. This particular grant was interesting because there has been a considerable amount of speculation as to who these men were (earlier accounts show different spellings of the names) and exactly where the grant was located (earlier accounts have it that these three operated a trading post on the present site of the Memorial Bridge on the west bank of the river). It is obvious that whatever enterprise these three gentlemen were involved in was on what is today known as Hart's Point, encompassing much of what is East Palatka.<sup>7</sup>

Andrew R. Govan also presented a claim to the land commission. His claim for six hundred acres, on April 1, 1824, encompassed what was referred to as New Buena Vista, also known as Orange Grove. He presented the copy of a title given Thomas de Aguilac by Governor Coppinger dated June 4, 1817, and marked S. He also presented a plat and certificate of survey by George J. F. Clarke dated April 15, 1818, and marked A. His claim, bounded on the south by Indian's Road, on the west by the St. Johns, and by vacant lands on the north and east was confirmed by the commission in 1824.<sup>8</sup>

Nehemiah Brush registered his claim for ten thousand acres with the commission December 31, 1825. The original claimant was F. Arredondo and sons, on a patent dated December 22, 1817. It

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<sup>7</sup>See General Highway Map, Putnam County, Florida (reprinted February, 1962).

<sup>8</sup>U. S., American State Papers; Public Lands, Vol. IV (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1859) p. 311.

was conceded by the Intendant of Cuba and Florida by an act of 1817 and all conditions were complied with. The site of the claim was in Alachua County and had been occupied from November, 1820, to December 28, 1824. On this latter date the claim was recommended for confirmation by the board to the Congress as part of the Arredondo Grant.

Bolton A. Copp presented a claim for one thousand acres on August 23, 1825. The land involved was described as being on the east bank of the St. Johns near Lake George. Apparently because the land had not been surveyed or more specifically described, Copp's claim was rejected.<sup>10</sup> Eventually he did obtain possession of all of what is now Palatka proper, but disposed of this to Nehemiah Brush and sons who actually began what can be termed as recent development of the site.

Other large grants in the vicinity of Palatka were those of: John Rodman, the largest in what is now Putnam County, in the vicinity of Rodman Junction;<sup>11</sup> Joseph M. Hernandez, who had the second largest grant on both sides of the river encompassing Saratoga, Stokes' Landing, Horse Landing and the Seven Sisters Islands; John Huertas, who had title to all of the Orange Mills area except for Govan's holdings on Forester's Point; Job Wiggins (Bartram's companion) who had holdings in the San Mateo area;

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 426.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 586.

<sup>11</sup>Rodman was appointed collector for the port of St. Augustine by President Monroe according to Niles' Register dated June 2, 1821; Davis, p. 77.

J. B. Entralgo, holding everything north of Copp's grant north to Rice Creek and the area south of Woodruff's claim to Wigger's holdings; Zepaniah Kingsley, who held the area around Brown's Landing and also Drayton Island; and Moses Levy, who had what is referred to today as Levy's Prairie. There were others, thirty-eight grants all told in Putnam County, but Henry Clay would have to be challenged as to his statement relative to all Florida soil being tied up in Spanish land grants.<sup>12</sup>

Andrew Jackson demonstrated his interest in learning of the valley when he travelled to the plantation of Horatio S. Dexter some six miles south of Lake George in 1821 shortly after Florida's annexation. He related this to the Secretary of War in a letter written from Pensacola on September 20, 1821. He also advised the appointment of George I. Brown of Baltimore as an agent in any capacity.<sup>13</sup>

The government was somewhat disturbed over the illegal use of public lands, especially where removal of timber was concerned. In a letter dated March 1, 1822, Acting Governor W. G. O. Worthington directed James G. Forbes at St. Augustine to arrest the crew of the brig loading cedar, live oak and pine from public lands near the plantation of Judge Fatio. The reply somewhat avoided the issue; on March 5, Forbes answered Worthington, saying that cutting was slow because cedar was scarce, and that a man

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<sup>12</sup>See General Highway Map, Putnam County, Florida (reprinted February, 1962).

<sup>13</sup>Clarence Edwin Carter, Territorial Papers of the United States; Territory of Florida, 1821--1824 Vol. XXII (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1956) p. 212.

named Smith had a contract with the British to provide them with timber. He also mentioned that the United States Navy was also cutting in the area. Forbes was an individual who must have been something approaching the incompetent for on March 16 he once again wrote Worthington from St. Augustine stating that Smith was from New York, and had taken sixty-three cedar trees from Cedar Creek at Nine Mile Point. The trees had been purchased from one Cowan, deceased at the time of writing, and were in fact bound for England.

This violation of public domain was also noted in Washington. The Adjutant General James Gadsden wrote S. Thompson, the Secretary of the Navy, on March 6, 1822, informing him of the cutting, and requesting that a revenue cutter be stationed at Amelia Island. On March 9, Thompson directed Captain John H. Elton of the U.S.S. Park in Charleston to proceed to the mouth of the St. Johns and ". . . allow no vessel to pass without a strict examination."<sup>14</sup>

Other administrative difficulties also plagued the new territory. On the positive side, President Monroe appointed the second son of Alexander Hamilton, bearing the same name, as the United States Attorney for East Florida on April 25, 1822. Monroe also appointed Gad Humphreys as Indian agent on May 8. His job would obviously keep him occupied because thirty-five Indian villages existed in Florida according to a letter from the acting agent, John R. Bell, to Thomas Metalfe, a Congressman

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 377.

from Kentucky.<sup>15</sup>

Two of these were located in the Palatka area: one on the Oklawaha and another at Spring Garden. This indicates that the settlement Bartram visited had relocated. The total Indian population was estimated at not less than five thousand, a full third of these being Seminoles. There were, in addition, some three hundred slaves held by the Indians. No white settlement existed in what was considered to be Indian territory, but this does not mean that there were no settlers within the Indian area. DuVal recognized the uneasiness attendant to the situation. He wrote Secretary of War John C. Calhoun on June 21, 1822, that the Indians in the territory were nervous; there was no agent and many of them were in a "wretched state," due to the heavy rains which flooded much of their cropland.

About the same time, Colonel Abraham Eustis of St. Augustine wrote Secretary Calhoun asking if those settlers with Spanish grants in Indian territory could work them. He mentioned specifically three areas, Alachua, Hope Hill (on the St. Johns) and Volusia.

Calhoun took matters into his own hands and instructed Humphreys, who had as yet to make an appearance in Florida, to get to Florida, or else. This letter was dated August 19, 1822, several months after his appointment. The Secretary found it necessary to write the newly appointed agent again on September 11th and 18th; Humphreys finally informed him he would depart New York by October 18. It was January 24, 1823, before

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 463.

Humphreys finally arrived in Pensacola however.<sup>16</sup>

Calhoun, on August 21, 1822, instructed Eustis, in response to the latter's correspondence, that no grant in Indian territory could be settled without governmental permission.<sup>17</sup> The spark for the Second Seminole War was ignited; the Indians were informed that no whites would enter their territory, and the whites who were clamoring to get in were stymied. Many ignored the directive and entered anyway, in defiance of Calhoun's directive.

Humphreys dallied about for two years before he got around to submitting his recommendation for the Florida Indian Agency to Colonel Thomas L. McKenny, the General Superintendent of Indian Affairs; he indicated that it was ". . . good hammock ground. . . ." at the north end of a large swamp (Payne's Prairie) and had good water transportation via the Oklawaha and the St. Johns Rivers. In a letter to Walton dated September 30, 1825, he requested that the Department of War remove obstacles to navigation in the Oklawaha at a cost of three hundred dollars.<sup>18</sup>

The river assumed another major role in early Indian affairs. Samuel Y. Garey had been appointed, at a salary of five hundred dollars annually, to assist in the distribution of rations to the Indians of the St. Johns Valley in 1824. The site of his operation was Handly's old store, or Spaulding's lower store, near

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 598.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 512.

<sup>18</sup>Clarence Edwin Carter, Territorial Papers of the United States: Territory of Florida, 1821--1828, Vol. XXIII (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1958) p. 330.

the mouth of Oklawaha. Governor DuVal wrote Humphreys on November 27, 1824, instructing him as to the dispensation of these rations; not more than four hundred daily at fourteen cents per ration. The letter was directed to Humphreys rather than Garey, because the latter was in trouble; he'd been selling whiskey illegally to the Indians.

The need for a road to connect the two chief cities in Florida, St. Augustine and Pensacola, had been apparent for some time.<sup>19</sup> The Old King's Road, which dated well back into the colonial era, had fallen into disrepair and for all practical purposes was useless. Now a new controversy arose, where to locate the road? A letter written by one Daniel E. Busch to the Quartermaster General, Brigadier General Thomas S. Jesup on February 10, 1826, presented one point of view. He informed the General that the country between the St. Johns and Suwannee rivers from Alachua to the St. Mary's ". . . is altogether a pine Barren entirely unfit for cultivation or settlement."<sup>20</sup> He did have in mind the settlers in the middle St. Johns Valley, for he proposed that the new road follow the King's Road west from St. Augustine, swing southwest to Black Creek and cross the St. Johns there. It should then follow a route that would take it to Wanton's (Alachua) and thereby ". . . give to the inhabitants

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<sup>19</sup>These alternated as the territorial capital from 1821 to 1824 when a compromise between jealous factions in East and West Florida settled on Tallahassee. John Lee Williams and Dr. William H. Simmons were the two who proposed Tallahassee as the site.

<sup>20</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXIII, p. 440.

of the West bank of the St. Johns River a Road, which they are now wholly destitute of."<sup>21</sup>

The request for relief as to overland transportation also came from governmental agents. In August of 1826, the Assistant Quartermaster of St. Augustine, Issac Clarke, wrote the Postmaster General that the country bordering on the (King's) road is:

. . . not susceptible of cultivation, consequently there is no settlements, between this and the Alachua, a distance of ninety miles, travellers for the sake of accommodation leave this road at Alachua, pass by Wanton's to Palatki Ferry on the St. Johns even the mail travels that route at present.<sup>22</sup> The consequence is the Ferry at Picolati is not worth the attention of any responsible person, and those who do travel this route are subject to disappointment in crossing the River.<sup>23</sup>

The Postmaster General responded in January, 1827, authorizing the change in route even though the southerly route was some twenty-five miles further. The justification was that there were more settlements on the Palatka, Wanton and Dell's Road than on the Bellamy Road to the north; the Postmaster said he'd pay for the extension. There was the advantage of the mail being safer on the route to the south as well.

The Post Office must have anticipated re-routing through Palatka about this time, for in response to a letter written by Nehemiah Brush requesting that a Post Office be established at Palatka, the Postmaster General, John McLean, advised Brush that he'd submitted Brush's letter to James M. White, Florida's

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>The first reference to Palatka as such in the Territorial



delegate to Congress.

White was successful in his request, for Post Office Number 5395, Palatka, Florida, was created on December 15, 1826, with Samuel R. Ayers, Jr., as postmaster. Ayers had a three hundred dollar bond posted for him by Messrs. D. Floyd and T. Brush, Jr.<sup>24</sup> The first return was dated December 15, 1827; Ayers was still postmaster, although the post office number had changed to 6298.<sup>25</sup> The bond had been posted by D. Floyd and K. Brush, Sr. Thomas Brush served as postmaster during 1828. The number of the branch changed back to 5395. A change in those who posted bond is also to be noted; B. D. Fontane and C. Robison posted Brush's three hundred dollar bond.<sup>26</sup>

Indian difficulties probably forced the closing of the station at Palatka, although the lack of business could have been reason enough. The postal receipts for the whole territory in 1825 amounted to only \$1,093.53.<sup>27</sup>

Transportation and communication was a problem for those in the interior. As early as 1825 a proposal for a canal across the peninsula had been advocated, and even surveyed. Richard K. Call wrote to Congressman Hemphill, the chairman of the Congressional Committee on Roads and Canals, proposing two alternatives.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 981.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 978.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 981. This information is derived from Postal Book Number Three; Book Numbers One and Two were destroyed in a fire in Washington, D. C., on December 15, 1836. Just how the differences are accounted for is unknown.

<sup>27</sup>Davis, p. 21.

The first followed a route from the mouth of the Suwanee River to the Santa Fe River, to Orange Lake, then to the Oklawaha and the St. Johns. The second proposal was located somewhat further south, from the Oklawaha to the Withlacoochee River.<sup>28</sup> The latter received more recognition when it was actually proposed. The cost was estimated to be \$90,000.00. On January 14, 1826, a bill to cover the cost of a more sophisticated survey was referred to committee and passed favorably. A bill to authorize the survey was introduced into the House of Representatives on February 6, 1826. The Senate considered a similiar bill on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the same month, passed it and sent it on to the House and on February 21, the House followed suit with Senate.<sup>29</sup> By August 19, the Army Engineers were at work surveying a proposed site.

The chief argument favoring the canal was the high loss in shipping in the vicinity of the Florida Keys. Some sixty vessels had been lost in an unspecified period of time worth a total of \$700,000.00. If the canal existed, this loss could have been avoided in part.<sup>30</sup>

The engineers finally submitted their report on May 16, 1829, opposing the canal on the grounds that it was unfeasible due to the ". . . high land ridge in the interior."<sup>31</sup> The route chosen for the survey was to the north, from the Suwanee to the Santa Fe

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

to Black Creek to the St. Johns River. Apparently the lobby recognized that the Army would oppose the canal, for in June, 1827, they referred to a vast harvest of the orange crop in the vicinity of St. Augustine, and the following year, taking the negative approach, to a ". . . great scarcity of corn in Florida."<sup>32</sup>

The seed was planted however. More pressure would be brought to bear on the Congress in an attempt to get funds appropriated for a cross-peninsular waterway, finally currently being realized.

Meanwhile the demand for better access to the interior increased; to wait for the proposed canal was frustrating. In April, 1827, Captain Glassell, commanding the military contingent near the Indian Agency, was ordered by General Duncan L. Clinch to clear the Oklawaha River for use as a supply route which was less expensive and more efficient. The following month Lieutenant Francis D. Newcomb, pinpointed the source of the Oklawaha. In a letter to the Quartermaster General, Newcomb described the source as being a "Big Spring," six to seven fathoms in depth, and thirty to forty yards in width. The main spring was located only three miles from Fort King.<sup>33</sup>

Glassell reported also to Quartermaster General Jesup on July 3, 1827, that his Lieutenant Seawright cleared the Oklawaha, but the job left somewhat to be desired because of fever affecting half his men and the desertion of some of his Negroes.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>33</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . , Vol. XXIII, p. 844.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 880.

By July, however, the river would accommodate the transporting of supplies from Charleston, South Carolina. A large transport was to meet Lieutenant Louis A. Rigail at Picolata, where smaller vessels would then carry the material to Fort King. This missive dated June 15, 1827, written by Major T. Cross to Lieutenant Newcomb at Fort King, included an addendum; there was a stone house at "Pilatki," the ". . . proper place to deposit stores for the post."<sup>35</sup>

Captain Glassell was more cautious, and perhaps military. He wrote Jesup stating that he'd sent Lieutenant Newcomb overland to Palatka to determine the feasibility of building a road.<sup>36</sup> Newcomb reported back to Glassell on September 12, 1827. He recommended a general east north east route following the highest land from Fort King to Orange Lake. The creek of the same name had to be bridged, and then the road would continue on to Deep Creek, where it would be necessary to build a causeway and a forty foot bridge. The land between Orange and Deep Creeks was reported as being low, but the soil was firm. Eight miles from Deep Creek the military road would connect with the Wanton-Palatka route, some eight miles from Palatka itself. The whole route was some fifty miles in length and could be built at a cost of four hundred dollars if troops cut the road. Newcomb cautioned however, that during high water, no road would be "serviceable."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 884.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 922.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 925.

Lieutenant Seawright was still busy as well. He reported to Glassell that he'd found a better stream to follow in the Oklawaha maze, no less than twenty feet deep and ten feet in width. He also noted that a great number of trees had fallen into the stream in his letter dated September 27.<sup>38</sup> This would continue to be a problem.

The Indian began to more actively resist the white man during the first years of Florida's territorial status. On September 3, 1825, a band attacked the Solana plantation in the valley. Twenty-nine memorialists wrote the President on March 6, 1826, complaining of Indian attacks which included raiding plantations, killing cattle and hogs and enticing away slaves. They stated that the Governor and Indian Agent were unable to enforce directives. We ". . . must be compelled to abandon our plantations on the St. Johns River, and in the county of Alachua, unless the Governor is furnished with the force necessary to keep the Indians in their boundary."<sup>39</sup>

In October, fourteen more residents of the valley, including one James Woodruff, signed another petition sent to the President, again deploring the lack of protection afforded them from Indian raids.

This Indian activity affected the development of transportation more than any other factor. In the first place, nervous settlers were hesitant to enter the area because of raiding parties, and in the second, the military, which began to play a

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 926.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 462.

more prominent role in the territory, was unable to function efficiently because of the lack of transportation to facilitate the movement of men and supplies. The beginning of the Second Seminole War became more apparent.

On the political scene, Governor DuVal issued a proclamation on July 23, 1826, directing the establishment of thirteen election precincts in Florida which were to choose one man from each to serve on the Legislative Council. The two districts bordering what is now Putnam County were the Eighth, which encompassed what is now Alachua County, and the Twelfth, including all of St. Johns County outside the city limits of St. Augustine southwest to Buena Vista. The judges of the latter district were John Y. Carey, F. J. Fatio and Reuben Loring. Precinct headquarters were at the courthouse in St. Augustine.<sup>40</sup> In January, 1827, the newly elected council sent a petition to Congress, deploring the Indian raids which occurred ". . . within twenty miles of the walls of St. Augustine." Other excerpts from the memorial include: ". . . a whole family has fallen sacrifice to their vengeance. . . (and) individuals (have been) murdered while on the highway."<sup>41</sup> The council recommended that a regiment of troops be stationed at some point on the St. Johns River.

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 622.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 711.

CHAPTER VII. THE EMERGENCE OF PALATKA

Governor DuVal made several appointments in St. Johns County on February 9, 1827. At least one of these men, Bernardo Segui, was a resident of the immediate vicinity of Palatka.

TABLE 5  
VALLEY SETTLERS: THE AMERICAN ERA<sup>a</sup>

Office	Name
Judge of the County Court . . . . .	Issac N. Cox
Clerk of the County Court . . . . .	Ann C. Tingle
Sheriff . . . . .	Squire Streeter
Coroner . . . . .	E. B. Gould
Surveyor. . . . .	Zepaniah Gibbs
Justices . . . . .	John Y. Carey
	Francis P. Fatio
	William Livingston
	John Moore
	F. Pellicer
	Bernardo Segui
Notary Public . . . . .	Francis J. Fatio

<sup>a</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . ., Vol. XXIII, p. 779.

One account credits Segui with having title to the Palatka area prior to 1819. This can be derived from the text of the bill of sale transferring the Palatka Grant from Belton Copp to Doctor Nehemiah Brush.

I, Belton A. Copp, for eight hundred dollars, sell Nehemiah Brush, a place on the tract called Gray's Place on New Buena Vista, now known as Palatka, a tract originally

given to Bernardo Segui by the Spanish Government.

Segui gave it to George Fleming in 1819. Fleming gave it to Copp on August 23, 1821. In 1824, Copp's claim was validated by the United States Board of Land Commissioners in St. Augustine. Half of the twelve hundred acre tract was purchased by Brush on February 14, 1826, and the second half on August 31, 1827.<sup>1</sup>

That Copp did own the tract, and that the claim had been validated is without question.<sup>2</sup> A number of maps also have Joseph Gray in the area, which substantiates the reference to Gray's Place. The area referred to as New Buena Vista, however, was east of the river, approximately between East Palatka and Orange Mills.

More confusion was added by the contents of a letter written by Robert Butler to Henry Washington at Lake Jackson on December 25, 1832. The letter dealt with the Arredondo Grant in Alachua County and included a deposition by one Herman H. Holliman, dated November 24, 1832, who visited Payne's Prairie in the fall of 1822. He stayed at the house of Edward M. Wanton in Micanopy. Holliman's statement included remarks relative to activity at Palatka.

I left my residence on the St. Mary's River . . . in February 1822, in pursuit of two Negroe (sic) who were taken by the Seminole Indians from my father in 1818. I stopped at a place on the Western bank of the river known as Paladka (sic), where I remained one night . . . I endeavored to procure an Indian Negro named John, as a guide and interpreter . . . (John couldn't go because of a sore foot.) I found Mr. Woodruff, and one or two other men employed whose names I do not recollect. There was a

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<sup>1</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 19, 1953.

<sup>2</sup>See General Highway Map, Putnam County, Florida (reprinted February, 1962).



Storehouse & two or three other houses built of logs which seemed to have been put up. Six or eight months previous to my visit at Paladka these houses were build at Paladka, and were occupied at the time I was there, one of which was inhabited at the time by Mr. Woodruff. A place of deposits, to supply the New York Company with Supplies and previsions & c. for the purpose of enabling Said Co to form a settle- ment West of the St. Johns River. left Paladka the latter part of February 1822. went upriver to Hope Hill. hired negro Abram to go after two negroes. I worked at Hope Hill for Rotan, manager of Hope Hill--owned by Levy living Charleston, South Carolina, Davis with one--Mechanic William Cannowit at Hope Hill. worked putting up a building. Hope Hill is a hammock bluff on the west side of the St. Johns ten miles above Lake George by water. I do solemnly Swear by the Holy Evangelist of Almighty God, that the foregoing State- ment is Strictly true to the best of my Knowledge.

sworn, subscribed to Henry Washington Deputy Surveyor.  
Teste Britton Knight.<sup>3</sup>

Holliman obviously met Woodruff on the site of what is now Palatka, but what Woodruff was doing there is not exactly clear. No mention is made of his specific occupation, much less his full name. More light was shed on the picture by Butler's letter however; it also included the deposition (in the same handwrit- ing as Holliman's) of one James Kelly dated November 27, 1832. This deposition dealt with taking of testimony of the Arredondo Grant as well, and substantiated Holliman's testimony, adding that there was a blacksmith named Bunnell in the town which was primarily a trading and supply post for the owners of the Arredondo Grant. The buildings were reported to have been con- structed by one W. T. Hall, assisted by two men named Smith and Lannam.

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<sup>3</sup>Clarence Edward Carter, Territorial Papers of the United States: Territory of Florida, 1828--1834, Vol. XXIV (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1959) p. 782.

Deposition--Doctor James Kelly--November 27, 1832<sup>4</sup>

- Q. Where [did you go] after leaving St. Augustine?<sup>5</sup> [Doctor Kelly made his trip during a three month period in 1822.]
- A. To Paladka<sup>6</sup> by land.
- Q. Who went with you?
- A. Mr. Woodruff went with me in company to Paladka.
- Q. Did you form any acquaintance?
- A. I became acquainted with an old gentleman by the name of Bunnell, a blacksmith, and a Mr. Woodruff who was keeping [a] Store.
- Q. Were there any houses?
- A. There were two log houses built of Pine, the poles not barked; one of which houses was occupied as a dwelling the other was then occupied as a storehouse. The two Mr. Woodruffs occupied these two buildings.
- Q. Describe the supplies.
- A. There was flour, pickled beef in barrels, pickled pork in barrels, whiskey, tea, molasses, salt, pepper, onions, and potatos, which were brought from New York for the benefit of the New York Company, who intended to settle the Grant of Arredondo.
- Q. Who built the houses?
- A. I heard a Mr. Smith say that he was employed as a workman . . . hired by one of the Agents of the Grant of Arrendondo, to work upon the houses above alluded to but I do not recollect the names of the other workmen . . . .
- Q. Were there any houses in the neighborhood of Paladka?
- A. There were two houses built about a mile from Paladka? on the same side of the river, by Horatio S. Dexter, which were occupied by an Indian Negro--there were log houses--Mr. Dexter was then living at Voluska, on the St. Johns River.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 783ff.

<sup>5</sup>Who asked the questions is not certain.

<sup>6</sup>All spelling and capitalization as in original manuscript.

Two Woodruff's were alluded to, but no first name was given either. It was apparent that at least one was a storekeeper, but whether he was a trader is not clear. He must have been tending the supply house referred to in Holliman's deposition. Mr. Bunnell, the blacksmith, might very well have been responsible for the town of the same name existant today. Horatio S. Dexter, employer of the Indian Negro, had a grant of land encompassing all of Mount Royal, just to the west of Fruitland, and a short distant south of the Fish Hatchery at Welaka.

No mention was made of the storehouse referred to by Major Cross; obviously it had been constructed after 1822. At any rate it is clear that the enterprise that existed in Palatka was part of a larger operation, the New York Company with interests in the Arredondo Grant, and that the site was recognized as being the more logical terminal point for activity on the river because ocean going vessels could safely ply the St. Johns River as far as Palatka.

It was implied that no ferry existed at Palatka at the time. No mention was made of any activity across the river, in what is now East Palatka. The middle part of the valley was not an active area in any sense of the term. Only its potential had been recognized, by both governmental and private enterprise.

The 1830 census listed 15 counties in Florida, populated by 34,730 individuals (excluding Indians), 18,385 of whom were white. There were 15,501 Negro slaves and 844 freedmen. St. Johns County had 2538 inhabitants.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Woodburn Potter, The War in Florida (Baltimore: Lewis and Coleman, 1836) p. 1.

Perhaps it was too early. Palatka simply was not ready for development. The post office which had been established in 1826 was temporary in the strict sense of the term. By January 30, 1829, it had been discontinued. Not until August 17, 1841, was a permanent post office to be established in the area.<sup>8</sup> This implies that there was no demand for postal service in the area and that it was too costly a station to maintain. The military provided communications during the Second Seminole War period. The lack of demand suggests that activity was at a bare minimum. Much of what did occur obviously had to do with fortunes of the holders of the Arredondo Grant in Alachua County. Without the existence of the unidentified "New York Company," Palatka well may have not had its beginning when it did. Later, the military would realize the value of the place as the head of ocean navigation and a break in transportation point as well. After the Second Seminole War Palatka would come into its own.

Perhaps it was Indian unrest that accounted for the inactivity. In 1825, Philip Solano journeyed to St. Augustine from the valley with a threat from the Seminoles. Six of their number went to his plantation looking for three of their brothers who they suspected had been killed by whites and threatened revenge. Lieutenant Ganfield and twenty troopers met the six on June 21, 1825, with Solano in company, near Cabbage Swamp, twenty-eight miles from St. Augustine. The troops, thinking the Seminoles meant to do battle, fired on them contrary to orders. One

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<sup>8</sup>Letter from the Hon. D. R. Mathews, Member of Congress, May 13, 1965.

Indian was wounded and two were captured, one of whom was sent to console the other three; all six were understandably bitter, and returned to their lodges. Eventually the three missing Indians returned and the atmosphere cleared somewhat, especially after restitution was made to the six.<sup>9</sup>

Other incidents occurred closer to Palatka. Gad Humphreys, the Florida Indian Agent, wrote Governor DuVal on April 6, 1828, that an Indian had killed a white man near "Hamley's Old Store" on the Oklawaha. Other Indians gave pursuit, and shot him as he attempted to cross the river. He was presumed to have drowned.<sup>10</sup> Some Seminoles apparently were not imbued with the idea of an incident such as this leading to something greater in scope.

Palatka lay nearly dormant. Soon, what did exist would be destroyed, for until the establishment of Fort Shannon in 1838, the area would be a ghost town, deserted and burned.

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<sup>9</sup>John T. Sprague, The Florida War (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964) p. 28.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

## CHAPTER VIII. PALATKA DURING THE SECOND SEMINOLE WAR

Despite his slow start, Gad Humphreys eventually developed a good grasp of the situation he was supposed to administer. He wrote Acting Governor Walton on August 4, 1829, deploring the settling of whites near Indian country. He protested the character and behavior of these settlers, saying, "Drunkenness and riot have reigned triumphant. They . . . . prosecute their illicit business in comparative security."<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the Seminole Tribe had broken away from the Creek Nation early in the eighteenth century. It descended in part from the Parlarches, Eamuses and Kaloosas who lived in the general area east of the Mississippi River and south of Tennessee. The remnants of these tribes merged with the Biloxis, the Redsticks and runaway Creeks known as Seminoles and moved south into Florida. They conquered the Yemasees were assimilated during the 1700's. The Oklawaha Tribe, led by Yaha Hadgo, was one of the last members of the Yemasee family.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sprague, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Hadgo or Hajo in Seminole means, literally, ". . . a wildly valorous warrior"; other Seminole titles include: Micco, meaning highest in rank; Himjas, second in command; Amathla, the leader of a band; and Tustenuggee, a warrior of "prowess." Mark F. Boyd, Florida Aflame (Tallahassee: Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials).

Relations with the white man contrasted sharply, depending on whether the Indian was dealing with the Spanish or English. Generally speaking, the Spanish attitude was one of accommodation towards the Indians; "Treaties of Incorporation" was the term applied to their negotiations.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, the English dealt with the Indian incorporating "treaties of demarcation," meaning that specific areas were established as sanctuaries for both white and Indian.<sup>4</sup> Examples of these treaties were those of 1784 in the case of the former, when the Spanish met with the Seminole McGillivray, and in 1763, when the English obtained Florida.

Relations between the Seminoles and the United States had a distasteful beginning. Andrew Jackson conducted several punitive forays into Spanish Florida in retaliation for Seminole raids on settlements in Southern Alabama. On November 7, 1818 Jackson entered Pensacola, shortly withdrawing however, to United States Territory.

Captain John H. Bell was the first Indian Agent, representing the United States. He wrote Congress in February, 1821, listing the chief Indian villages in Florida. There were seven of importance, most of which were north of a line drawn from Hillsborough Bay to Cape Canaveral. Three villages were in the vicinity of Palatka: one at Spring Garden, just above Lake George under Uchee Billy; one of the Oklawaha, and one at A-lack-away-talofa, Alachua Plains. Although the latter was the largest

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<sup>3</sup>M. M. Cohen, Notices of East Florida and the Campaigns (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964) p.33.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

settlement, the Chief of the Seminole Nation, Micanopy, resided somewhat to the south at Pe-lac-le-ka-ha.<sup>5</sup>

The first treaty between the Seminoles and the United States was the "Treaty of Camp Moultrie" dated February 22, 1819. The white was confined to the Pensacola and St. Augustine vicinities. It gave the Seminoles five million acres in East Florida (nominally considered to include all of Florida east of the Suwanee River) and annuities were to be paid the Indians for a twenty year period of time. Several years later, however, the Indians were found to be starving. As a consequence, the government gave the Indians emergency rations.

"Hambly's Old Store," near the mouth of the Oklawaha River, was used as one distribution point for these rations. One ration consisted of a pound and a quarter of beef or three-quarters of a pound of salt pork and a quart of corn or a pound of flour. A quart of salt was issued with each one hundred rations. This particular contract was to exist for one year beginning October 10, 1824.<sup>6</sup>

Agent Gadsden reported to the President as late as March 17, 1832, that the Indians were starving and that it was difficult to contact them because most were in the interior hunting. The diet consisted of roots and the cabbage palm plus what was accumulated by hunting.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Boyd, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup>Martin, p. 230.



One of the chief complaints the Seminoles had was that whites were entering Indian territory to capture slaves. The Indians, as noted, were also slaveholders. On occasion they took it upon themselves to "liberate" Negro slaves; on occasion the Negro took it upon himself to join, willingly, the Indian, even as a slave. Sable property at least figured into some of the Seminole complaints, as well as the encroachment on his land by white settlers.

The white man kept pushing. Forty-three whites resorted to the common means of making their desires known, the petition, this time to the United States Congress in December of 1831. They requested five hundred dollars for the repair of the road from St. Augustine to Fort King via Palatka and Micanopy. The Brush family was represented in this memorial; A. G., J. A. and Thomas Brush each signed it.<sup>8 & 9</sup>

The place of residence of the petitioners was not noted, however several of the names were affiliated with valley grants and plantations. Nehemiah Brush gained access to the "Palatka Grant" in 1826 and operated a ferry there prior to the outbreak of the war. He was assisted by members of his family.

The Palatka area was noted for two things primarily; first, because of the ferry; and second, the fact that supplies could be purchased at the store. Brush was at least responsible for constructing the store referred to above.

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<sup>8</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . , Vol. XXIV, p. 621.

<sup>9</sup>On February 1, 1833, the governor appointed Jesse Brush, Joseph W. Hernandez and Benjamin A. Putnam Justices of the Peace for St. Johns County. Putnam later played a significant role in  
 area. Ibid., p. 618.

The elements also deterred expansion of activity in the valley. A yellow fever epidemic struck St. Augustine in 1821. The following year a hard freeze penetrated Florida, killing trees in West Florida "right to the ground." Another freeze struck East Florida in 1828; the temperature at Six Miles Creek dropped to twenty-seven degrees Fahrenheit. In 1835 a more severe frost occurred when seven degrees was recorded in February.<sup>10</sup> The river was frozen for several feet away from its bank.<sup>11</sup>

Little was recorded of events in the valley for the several years beginning in 1829; not until May 9, 1832, did the Seminoles agree to the "Treaty of Payne's Landing," signed at Orange Springs. Colonel James Gadsden had been directed by Lewis Cass, the Secretary of War, on January 1, 1832, to urge the Indians to relinquish their lands in Florida and move west with the Creek Nation across the Mississippi River. Gadsden was successful in his efforts if only for the fact that the Seminole was reluctant to sit in council with the white man.

Seven chiefs signed the treaty. Arpeike (Sam Jones), Charley Emathla, Coi-hadjo, Fuch-a-lus-to-had-jo (Black Dirt), Halpatter-Tustenugee (Alligator), Holate-Emathla, Jumper, and Ya-ha-had-jo (Mad Wolf) were to travel to Arkansas to inspect the new land. The Indian agent, Major John Phagan<sup>12</sup> and the interpreter Abraham were to accompany them, all at the expense of the

<sup>10</sup>Williams, p. 17ff.

<sup>11</sup>A heavy snowfall was recorded in the valley in 1774.

<sup>12</sup>President Andrew Jackson appointed Phagan to succeed Gad Humphreys. Sprague relates that Phagan was not qualified; perhaps he was justified, for on November 5, 1837, Acting Governor James D. Wescott, Jr., discovered "fraud and improper conduct" in the Indian Agency. Williams, p. 72.

United States Government. Seven Articles composed the treaty; these dealt with: first, the relinquishing of all lands in Florida held by the Seminoles to the United States and that the Seminoles would emigrate to Arkansas; second, the United States would compensate them to the extent of \$15,400.00 to be divided among the chiefs and warriors of each town based on the population of the town, this sum to be paid when they arrived at the Creek location; third, they would receive, upon arrival in Arkansas, one blanket and one "frock" for each individual; fourth, that the United States would provide a blacksmith and pay three thousand dollars per year for fifteen years to the Seminole Nation after relocation of the entire tribe; fifth, that the United States would sell the Seminoles' cattle and reimburse the owners after their arrival in the new land; sixth, that the United States would investigate and reimburse claims made against the Seminoles for stolen or destroyed property, including slaves, to the extent of seven thousand dollars; and seven, that the Seminoles would remove themselves within three years, the cost to be borne by the United States. The emigration would begin "as soon as practible" in 1833, and be completed by 1835. Fifteen Seminoles affixed their marks to the treaty.<sup>13</sup> & <sup>14</sup> The Senate ratified the treaty on April 8, 1834.

Before the seven left, they made it known they were not happy about leaving Florida, part of the reason being that they didn't get along with the Creeks. They did depart however, in

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>14</sup>Author's note: At least Florida was worth more than Manhattan.

September, and inspected the new land during its most dismal season as discernible above. While in the Creek Nation, they signed the Treaty of Fort Gibson which reiterated the Treaty of Payne's Landing, and reaffirmed that they would relocate in Arkansas. All seven signed this treaty which was ratified by the Senate on the same day the Payne's Landing Treaty was approved.<sup>15</sup>

They returned to Florida in April and related to the nation what had transpired, giving a considerably different version to their people however; for one thing, they denied giving up the Seminole claim to Florida. The older chief had not been given a voice, and some of the younger men, such as Powell (Osceola) urged nullification of the acts of the seven. But the treaty had been ratified and the United States began to push for compliance with it. A new agent, General Wiley Thompson, was appointed, and General Douglas L. Clinch was put in command of the troops in Florida.<sup>16</sup>

Osceola, although not a chief, enjoyed a great deal of influence with Micanopy, Jumper, Alligator and Holate Emathla, and in council with them, stood and told Thompson that he, nor his warriors, did not care if they never received another dollar from their great father. He drew his knife and declared that the only treaty he would execute, driving the knife into the table " . . . is with this!"<sup>17</sup>

Eight chiefs in council at Fort King on April 24, 1835,

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<sup>15</sup>Williams, p. 76ff.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

agreed to abide by the treaty, however, and went to Tampa, where they embarked on January 1, 1836, for New Orleans.<sup>18</sup>

Other incidents further aggravated the situation. Six Seminoles slaughtered a cow and were cooking it on the shore of Deadman's Pond in Alachua County when a number of whites came  $\frac{1}{2}$  to them and took their rifles and packs and beat the Indians. Four more Indians approached and fired on the whites. One Indian was killed and one wounded. Both sides withdrew, the whites carrying away the packs of the Indians. When the militia heard of the battle, they took the field against "the marauders."<sup>19</sup>

United States troops in Florida numbered four hundred eighty-nine: one company of fifty-three men was stationed at St. Augustine; three companies were at Fort Brooke (Tampa) and six at Fort King.<sup>20</sup>

The agent in charge of overseeing the migration estimated that there were three thousand Seminoles in Florida (including their Negroes), sixteen hundred of whom were female. This agent, a Lieutenant Harris, also estimated that only four to five hundred of the Seminoles were warriors.<sup>21</sup>

In May, 1835, Olapatha-Hajo, camped at the head of Salt Springs, attacked the Switzer plantation, owned by General Clinch, located near the mouth of Silver Springs Creek. The band shot

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 87

<sup>20</sup>Potter, p. 98.

<sup>21</sup>Williams, p. 87.

Captain Farnham and forced the Switzer family out, burning the place in the process. About the same time, Public Surveyor Kerr was driven off the land to the west of Lake George where he was working.<sup>22</sup> The schooner "Jane and Mary," commanded by Captain Willy, fired a six-pounder over the heads of fifty Indians who threatened the vessel on the St. Johns while carrying ammunition and stores to Fort King.<sup>23</sup> The river was acknowledged to be the most efficient route to Fort King by Lieutenant F. L. Dancy in 1835. He wrote General Jesup on March 14, that the best route was to use the river as far as Palatka, and then overland to the fort.

Palatka was growing, due to increased military activity primarily. Speculation increased when the East Florida Railway Company was incorporated in 1835 with a capital stock of \$500,000.00. It was to build a road from any point on the St. Johns River to the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>24</sup>

Elections were held in May of 1835 in St. Johns County. One polling station was at the home of E. Varness in "Pilatka." The election judges were Varness, Darius Ferris and David Palmer.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>The United States Land Office began the survey of Florida early in the 1830's. Colonel Robert Butler was appointed Surveyor-General. He established his office at Tallahassee. George Lucas was one of the first field men; his commission was dated June 8, 1840. Later, Robert Reid served in this capacity, commissioned on January 17, 1856, and again on the same date in 1860. The office was disbanded on February 13, 1880. Times-Herald, January 3, 1824.

<sup>23</sup>Williams, p. 215.

<sup>24</sup>George W. Pettengill, Jr., Story of Florida Railroads, Bulletin No. 86 (Boston: Railroad & Locomotive Historical Society, Inc., July, 1952) p. 11.

<sup>25</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXV, p. 127.

Joseph M. Hernandez suggested in a letter to Governor Eaton in October, that two hundred mounted men be provided to patrol the triangular area between Spring Gardens, the Suwannee River and Palatka in an attempt to assist the army and to keep a closer check on raids by the Seminoles.<sup>26</sup>

Too little too late. Lieutenant Francis L. Dancy wrote General Jesup from Fort Drane on February 10, 1836, informing him that Palatka had been burned by the Seminoles in 1835. Prior to the firing of the town, Dancy had taken four month's supplies for fifty men, working on the Oklawaha, off a steamer at Picolata. The bulk of these stores was safe, however three lighters full had been sent to Palatka; how much of this was destroyed or stolen Dancy didn't know. He had little hope for them, as well as for " . . . a gentleman inhabiting that place" with whom he'd left them. He went on to say that the river above Picolata was entirely deserted.<sup>27</sup>

On December 25, 1835, Henry Woodruff was shot and scalped at Spring Garden by the half-breed McKenzie. Further north two men, a Mr. Hatch and Mr. Lenovas, were killed near Picolata. Woodruff was one of the initial settlers of the United States period.<sup>28</sup>

Williams substantiates Dancy's report of the devastation of the valley. He defined the major work of the Seminoles as having been accomplished by early 1836. Included were the plantations

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>28</sup>Cohen, p. 79.

of John Bulow (one of the finest in Florida), Mrs. Anderson, Dummet Andrews, and Joseph M. Sanchez on Dunn's Lake.<sup>29</sup> Williams declared the Sanchez place, "Esperanzee," to be the " . . . one considerable establishment above Palatka."<sup>30</sup>

The Seminoles attacked a government wood-cutting team on Drayton Island on December 7 and 8. Two men escaped, both of whom were wounded.<sup>31</sup> On the ninth, Generals Call and Hernandez reiterated the request for a mounted militia and requisitioned five hundred muskets. The Ordnance Department replied that it couldn't provide one quarter of that number, much less cartridges, and the powder that existed was unfit for use. The militia armed itself.<sup>32</sup>

Potter placed the destruction of Palatka during January, 1836, emphasizing the burning of " . . . the establishment of Doctor Brush, near Palatka, Mr. Hatch's house and several others."<sup>33</sup> Spring Garden was destroyed in January as well. The chief target there was the plantation of Colonel Rees, although A. Forrester had been driven out as well. His plantation was destroyed, including thirty hogsheads of sugar. One hundred sixty-two slaves had been taken, and "A large number of horses and mules were also taken, and a Mr. Woodruff and a negro were killed."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Williams, p. 247.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Potter, p. 100.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 117.



The raids had started further south, along the Mosquito River, as early as October. Brigadier General Joseph Hernandez called out the militia on the twenty-sixth, and four companies, A, B, C and D, of Colonel Joseph S. Sanchez's regiment took the field. On November 15, Company A, a few volunteers and the St. Augustine Guards, commanded by Captain K. B. Gibbes, left for the Darley Plantation. Overall commander was Major Benjamin A. Putnam. The force was not successful in locating the raiders however, despite the fact that the pillaging continued. John Caesar, a Negro, led the Seminoles in raids on the Cruger, DePuyster and Rees plantations near Spring Garden in a demonstration of well-planned hit and run tactics which served to keep the militia off balance. In December the Indians doubled back to the north and raided the Baya Plantation only twelve miles from St. Augustine. Putnam responded by moving to Bulowville where he was joined by Captain Keog and Company D. This combined force moved to the junction of Bulow Creek and the Halifax River and met the Indians at Dummet's plantation on January 11, 1836. In the Battle of Dunlawton, as it was referred to, the militia killed one Negro and ten Indians. Putnam wasn't completely successful in his venture however, for it became necessary to return to St. Augustine by the middle of the month.

Reports of Putnam's frustration in chasing the Seminoles probably instigated the Commanding General of the Florida Militia, R. K. Call, to write the President on December 22, declaring the whole country between the St. Johns and the Suwannee to be abandoned.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>War Department, Operations in Florida (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1838) p. 319.

Outside assistance first arrived at St. Augustine on January 30, 1836, when four companies of volunteers from Charleston, South Carolina, disembarked the steamers "Santee" and "Dolphin" to a warm reception. There were more volunteers in Charleston than could be accommodated due to the great publicity given Floridians along the east coast of the country, and the adventuresome spirit of fellow Southerners.

The local residents quickly dubbed these units with patriotic and militaristic names; e.g., "Washington's Volunteers"; the "Washington Light Infantry"; the "German Fusiliers"; and the "Hamburg Volunteers."<sup>36</sup>

The liberators, at Camp Eustis near St. Augustine, were fired on by the Seminoles on February 9, but not until the nineteenth did they take to the field, initially moving south, under General Eustis, to Bulow aboard the "Dolphin." The force then continued to the plantation of Major Heriot, twelve miles from the Halifax River, and erected a breastworks and a small storehouse on top of which was placed a small cannon. The post was attacked at dawn on March 10, 1836, by two hundred and fifty Indians reputedly led by King Phillip's son. Three of the troopers were killed, but the Seminoles got away without any losses.<sup>37</sup>

The volunteers then left Heriot's and moved first to Volusia and then Spring Garden. They crossed the Oklawaha to take part in a plan devised by General Winfield Scott (who arrived

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<sup>36</sup>Cohen, p. 123.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 151.

at Picolata on February 22, 1836) which involved a pincer-like movement on Micanopy's camp at Pilaklikaha. Sometime before leaving the valley, the force was put under the overall command of General Shelton, and killed Yatta Hajo (Crazy Wolf), chief of the Oklawaha Tribe which numbered fifty warriors. The chief was left lying without burial, " . . . to be hawked at by kites, his flesh gnawed by wolves, and his bones crunched by bears."<sup>38</sup>

War is hell.

These attacks were part of a coordinated effort on the part of the Seminole to attempt, in a series of lightning-quick, devastating attacks, to force the white man out of Florida. The half-breed Osceola had much to do with devising the plan. One of his first moves was to murder Charley Emathla, a chief who had agreed to emigrate to Arkansas. On December 28, 1835, shortly after the valley raids, he murdered General Thompson, the Indian Agent, and Lieutenant Smith near Fort King. He then attacked the sutler's place at Fort King, killing six more people.

The incident which really sparked the Second Seminole War occurred on December 25, 1835, when Florida literally exploded. Major Francis L. Dade of the Fourth Infantry and two companies of troops from Fort Brooke were ambushed five miles east of Wahoo Swamp. All but four privates were killed; three of these escaped to Tampa, and the fourth was killed the next day. The chiefs responsible for this attack were Alligator, Jumper and Micanopy.

Alligator and Osceola devised another ambush on December 29; General Clinch and two hundred men of the First, Second, and

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 169.

Third Regiments of Artillery were attacked on the bank of the Withlacoochee River by two hundred fifty warriors, thirty of whom were Negroes. Volunteers under General R. K. Call took part in the fray. Although there were four hundred and sixty men in Call's command, only twenty-seven crossed the river to assist Clinch. The casualties for the day were four regulars dead and forty wounded, including fifteen volunteers. Three Indians were killed and only five were wounded in the fray.

These initial setbacks threw confusion into the area in general and at the same time encouraged the Indians to attempt to drive the whites out of their land. Sixteen plantations in the valley were completely destroyed in January, 1836.

The Indians effectively frustrated initial attempts to reinforce the garrison at Fort King by disrupting the transportation and communication lines, a not very difficult task, for roads were nearly non-existent and almost completely under the control of the Seminoles. River traffic was hampered by the Indian practice of felling trees into the channel. On such as the Oklawaha, this most efficiently slowed any attempt at navigation. The practice up to this point had been to rely on the river as the chief means of transportation and communication. An early attempt to avoid reliance on the Oklawaha was effected in February, 1836, when plans were made to travel up the St. Johns to Volusia, and cross overland into the interior. Steamboats were employed to transport men and supplies.

The earliest use of steamers on the St. Johns was in May of 1831, when the "George Washinton" arrived at Jacksonville after

a thirty-four hour run from Savannah.<sup>39 & 40</sup>

The steamer "Cincinnati" was chartered on January 9, 1837 at two thousand dollars per annum to ferry troops and equipment from Charleston to Garey's Ferry (Black Creek) and Volusia.<sup>41</sup> Prior to February 16, 1838, forty vessels were chartered by the military.<sup>42</sup>

These vessels were rather basic; in April, a detachment which included General Winfield Scott, Colonel Gadsden, Captain Canfield, Lieutenant J. E. Johnston and seventeen men, plied up-river to Lake Monroe in ". . . a miserable little steamer."<sup>43</sup> Among other steamers on the river during this period were the "Essayons," "Santee" and the John Stoney."

Vessels at least as large as schooners had plied the St. Johns as early as 1832. John James Audubon sailed the upper river on the "Spark" in February, after having crossed overland from the plantation of his American friend John Bulow. He was not impressed, stating ". . . blind mosquitoes covered every

<sup>39</sup>Nile's Register, June 18, 1831, p. 284.

<sup>40</sup>The "George Washington," a side-wheeler, had been built in Charleston in 1827. It was ninety feet, eight inches long, sixteen feet, seven inches wide and five feet, three inches deep, displacing eighty-six tons. It called at the principal settlements in East Florida: Fernandina, Jacksonville, Picolata and St. Augustine, making six trips in 1831. Edward A. Mueller, "East Coast Florida Steamboating, 1831--1861," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXX No. 3 (January, 1962) p. 242.

<sup>41</sup>U. S., American State . . . ., Vol. VII, p. 995.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 996.

<sup>43</sup>Sprague, p. 168.

object," and in closing his journal, ". . . crushing between the leaves more than a hundred of the little wretches."<sup>44</sup>

On December 3, 1832, Lieutenant Joseph W. Harris wrote General Jesup from Fort King commenting on transportation between that place and "Palatka," already a supply depot of some extent. Lieutenant Alden had been in charge of the first trip, made with a keelboat fifty-five feet long and eight feet wide with a draft of seventeen inches. Poles and oars were used to propel the vessel, manned by a crew of eight. The cargo was protected by a box-like enclosure which extended four feet above the gunwales.<sup>45</sup> The route followed the Oklawaha River.

As the raids increased in frequency, the whites pulled in- to areas of settlement where they could expect some semblance of safety. Potter described the typical village as having "pickets" surrounding the towns. These pickets were constructed of split pine, eighteen feet long, flattened on one side and driven into the ground. The barrier was reinforced by a board along the top, on the inside, and the tops of the stakes were sharpened. Holes to accommodate firearms were spaced approximately seven to eight feet high, and the defenders stood on benches some three feet off the ground ". . . from which the fire is delivered."<sup>46</sup> There is no evidence that such a barrier existed at Palatka.

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<sup>44</sup>John James Audobon, Delineations of American Scenery and Character (New York: G. A. Bakery and Company, 1926) p. 126.

<sup>45</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . , Vol. XXIV, p. 757.

<sup>46</sup>Potter, p. 98.

Captain Samuel Shannon had served as assistant Quartermaster at Pensacola as early as 1833. He was credited by Potter with leading a baggage train for a column under Brigade-Major Izard which was part of a contingent of seven companies of artillery and infantry commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Foster.<sup>47</sup> (The origin and destination was not mentioned.) Shannon apparently was constantly on the move, for he was reported to have been in Picolata on March 1, 1836.<sup>48</sup> On April 11, he was in Tampa. Shannon is the man for whom the fort at Palatka was eventually named.

As military activity in Florida pushed further south, the importance of Palatka as a staging area increased. The steamer "Florida,"<sup>49</sup> a side-wheeler, inaugurated the first packet service on the river in April of 1834, commuting between Savannah and Picolata.<sup>50</sup>

A definite supply problem existed, as attested to by General Clinch who, being chastised for not taking the initiative against the Seminoles, justified his inactivity by placing part of the blame upon the lack of port facilities. He suggested that a number of depots be established. (Clinch was relieved by General Thomas S. Jesup on December 8, 1836.) One such attempt

<sup>47</sup>Potter, p. 136.

<sup>48</sup>U.S., American State . . . , Vol. VII, p. 309.

<sup>49</sup>The "Florida" was completed in Savannah in 1834. It was one hundred and four feet in length with a twenty foot, five inch beam. It had a hold seven feet, four inches deep.

<sup>50</sup>Mueller, p. 242.

occurred in December 1836, when Lieutenant-Colonel Fanning was sent to Lake Monroe where he established Fort Mellon, named for the owner of a plantation there. It was manned by four companies of artillery and a battalion of South Carolina Volunteers under Major Hardee. Thirty friendly Creeks accompanied him under Paddy Car and Captain Piercy.<sup>51</sup>

Four hundred Seminoles under Philip attacked this post on February 8, 1837, and killed Mellon. They broke off the attack about eight o'clock in the evening and retreated, leaving twenty-five of their number dead. Ultimately, fever defeated the troops, for in June, both Volusia and Fort Mellon were abandoned due to widespread sickness among the troops.

As the noose tightened around the Seminoles, Jesup ordered all whites south of a line drawn across the peninsula from Fort Drane (ten miles south of Micanopy) east to the St. Johns River out of the area. This allowed whites to move into the Palatka vicinity. On June 3, however, three Indians were captured near Palatka indicating a yet existent threat.

The pressure continued, and some old-time settlers began to pull out. Part of the Fatio Grant on the Nassau River was repossessed by William Robertson of Savannah; Clark's Grant, opposite Picolata and including Bayard, some 16,000 acres, was offered for sale. The advertisement advised interested parties to contact General Duncan L. Clinch at St. Mary's, or John Lee Williams at Bayard or Picolata. Six thousand acres of the Huerta Grant, including Buenavista, were offered for sale by J. Avice at

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<sup>51</sup>Williams, p. 269.



St. Augustine. Williams was the broker for this property as well.<sup>52</sup>

Close to the source of the Withlacoochee was Fort Dade, named for the ambushed major. On March 6, 1837, Malatoochee (Davy), Jumper and Yaholoochee, representatives of Chief Micanopy, agreed with Major General Thomas S. Jesup to capitulate. The Treaty of Fort Dade contained eleven stipulations: first, hostilities were to cease immediately; second, it was agreed that the Seminoles would emigrate west immediately; third, hostages to guarantee their emigration were to be provided the commanding general; fourth, any Indian found north of a line drawn from Fort Foster on the Hillsborough River east to the ocean without permission of the commanding general would be considered hostile; fifth, Jesup guaranteed the safe movement of the Seminoles and their allies, including Negroes, to the Creek Nation, and that they would be reimbursed for their stock; sixth, all expenses would be provided by the United States; seventh, the nation was to assemble at Tampa Bay to await transportation. During this period and for a year hence, subsistence was to be provided them by the government; eighth, the Seminoles would assemble as soon as possible, at most by the tenth of April, Yaholoochee to be the first with his people immediately; ninth, transports would be ready to take them to their new home; tenth, Micanopy would be one of the hostages; and eleventh, the Articles of the Treaty of Payne's Landing which were advantageous to the Indians but not specified in the present treaty were to be recognized. The

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

Indians signing the treaty were Hal-Pota-Hajo's representative, John Ca-Wy-Ya, Hoeth-Lee-Ma-Tee, Halatoochee, Jumper and Yaholoochee (Cloud).<sup>53</sup>

The general feeling was that the war was over; whites began moving back into their homes, especially after Osceola agreed to the treaty. The aura of relief was short lived however, for on June 5, Jesup wrote to Washington stating that the Indians who had come to Fort Brooke ran away, saying they would not leave Florida. The following month, on July 25, Jesup asked to be relieved.<sup>54</sup> He ultimately was relieved on May 15, 1838 by Brevet Brigadier-General Zachary Taylor. The peace was short lived. Jesup wrote that the Indians were now primarily south of Tampa and Lake Monroe but were not complying with the treaty. The government then began to push for compliance.

A great deal of volunteer activity dominated military operations in the valley. The Washington Volunteers were only the first of many similiar units which came to Florida as saviors. Colonel Snodgrass and Lieutenant-Colonel Coffee, both commanding Alabama detachments, and Major Lauderdale and his Tennessee Volunteers scoured the country from Black Creek to the Oklawaha in the St. Johns area. Several deserted villages were destroyed, but little action occurred.

Not all the volunteers were overly enthused about campaigning in Florida, nor were regulars for that matter; on February 26, 1836, a company of Georgia Mounted Volunteers at Tocoi refused to

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<sup>53</sup>Sprague, p. 170ff.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 180.

enlist in the military service and returned to their homes.<sup>55</sup>

Hernandez was mustered into the regular army in December of 1836, and was given command of all the area east of the St. Johns River. By September 10, 1837, he'd captured both King Philip and Uchee Billy, and the Indian raids diminished. As the military became more organized, the tide of battle turned, however slowly.

General Taylor divided the whole territory into military districts of twenty square miles. A fort or post was to be established in the center of each district which would have created a total of fifty-three new strongholds. Each of these would be manned by twenty to thirty troops, some of whom were mounted, and every other day each district would be scouted so as to check on any Seminole movements.<sup>56</sup>

The country was somewhat more peaceful, for none of the topographical engineers, in groups of from five to ten, were bothered by the Indians while surveying the military districts.

This may have been the occasion on which Captain F. Searle surveyed Florida from "Palatka" to Fort Fanning on the Suwannee River for a projected railroad undertaking. The proposed route was almost due west from Palatka, south of Newman's Lake and then to Fanning.

Palatka was part of Square Number Ten in Taylor's scheme. Lieutenant J. W. Gunnison plotted it in 1840, indicating both Palatka and Fort Shannon at the eastern extremity of the Fort

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

King and Palatka Road. Fort Brooks, Fort Lawson, Fort Russell and Fort Number Ten and Eleven were also indicated on the map. In addition, a campsite of the Second Infantry is indicated just southwest of Picolata.

An earlier map of 1839 by Lieutenant C. Tompkins indicates that before Fort Lawson was expanded, a military camp existed there named for General Taylor. It was probably developed by Major Churchill who opened the road from "Pilatka" to Fort King.

Taylor reported that one hundred and ninety-six Indians and Negroes were ready to leave Florida on February 25, 1839. Among other guards, Lieutenant George G. Meade would accompany them.<sup>57</sup>

Another peace agreement brought an end to Taylor's scheme however. Major General Alexander Macomb went to Fort King on May 20, 1839, to meet Halleck-Tustenuggee, Thlock-lo-Tustenuggee, Tiger Tail and Sam Jones representing Chitto-Tustenuggee. After three days of negotiating, the Indians agreed to settle on land to the south for a temporary sixty day period of time, after which they would comply with the Dade and Payne Treaties.

Macomb's activities were recorded by an aide, Lieutenant John T. Sprague. His party left Fort Heileman, some eighteen miles up Black Creek, on April 8, 1839, on the transport "Cincinnati." bound for Fort Mellon. They passed Palatka at three-thirty in the afternoon, stopping only long enough to observe that there were a hundred troops stationed at Fort Shannon.

After the treaty negotiations at Fort King, which Dr. Brush attended, Sprague recorded that the mission then marched overland

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<sup>57</sup>Edwin C. McReynolds, The Seminoles (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1957) p. 210.

to "Pilatka," escorted by some of Captain Dade's Dragoons. They left Fort King on May 23, 1839. The trip was uneventful, and Sprague noted that the country was beautiful, ". . . but hardly susceptible to cultivation. No part of it has even been settled by other than Indians."<sup>58</sup>

They passed Fort Mackay that first day out; Mackay was located some fourteen miles north of Fort King on the Oklawaha River. It consisted of a picket wall equipped with blockhouses. The next day they rested at Fort Lawson, only four miles from Palatka; Sprague described it as a ". . . neat and strong picket work with one blockhouse erected in the midst of pine woods."<sup>59</sup> He pinpointed its location as between lakes to the north and south, both of which had clear water and sandy bottoms.<sup>60</sup> Fort Lawson was garrisoned by a sergeant and six men of the Seventh Infantry.

Sprague was not too impressed with the road that existed from Fort Shannon to Fort King; he commented, "The country is extremely flat and where it's not muddy, there is deep sand. This is the worst road we have seen in Florida."<sup>61</sup> Others would reflect this observation.

When Macomb returned to Washington the command reverted to General Taylor, who held little stock in the treaty. General

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<sup>58</sup>Frank F. White, Jr. (ed), "Macomb's Mission to the Seminoles," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXV No. 2 (October, 1956), p. 187.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>60</sup>This would locate it just south of Round Lake.

<sup>61</sup>White, p. 188.

Macomb directed him to occupy all the territory north of a line drawn from Palatka to the mouth of the Withlachochee River, fortifying it as he deemed necessary.<sup>62</sup>

The Indian Reserve was defined as being south of Pease Creek following a line to the northern point of Lake Istokpoga and from that point to Kissimmee to Okeechobee and west to the Gulf of Mexico.

The settlers, most of whom had been reduced to a refugee status concentrated in the overcrowded villages, rejoiced at the news. They immediately began to move back to their farms, but to a rude shock. The raids commenced again in July, 1839. A detachment under Lieutenant-Colonel Harney was attacked at Caloosahatchee on July 22.<sup>63</sup> The settlers returned to the villages.

On July 29, 1839, the Army of the South was headquartered at Fort Brooke on Tampa Bay. Lieutenant W. K. Hanson moved over to Fort Mellon and was instructed to repair it so it could be defended, only, however, if the surgeons deemed the place healthy. Sickness was a major problem for the army. On May 6, 1840, when Taylor was relieved by Brigadier-General W. R. Armistead, there were three thousand forty-three enlisted men and two hundred forty-one officers stationed in Florida. A total of five hundred sixty-four were sick and not fit for duty.<sup>64</sup> The largest post then was Fort Brooke.

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<sup>62</sup>Carter.

<sup>63</sup>Sprague, p. 233.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

In 1840 Halleck Tustenuggee was responsible for keeping the area between St. Augustine and Fort King in a constant state of alarm. On March 2, a band of Seminoles, thirty-five strong, killed a Corporal Long who was hunting near Fort Brooks on the Oklawaha. They leaped and yelled over his body in an attempt to draw the troops into an ambush. A detachment of Second Infantry commanded by First Lieutenant William Alburtis thought the ruckus was an attack on an expected supply train from Fort Russell, and with nineteen men crept up behind the Indians driving them off, but suffering casualties to a sergeant, a corporal and five privates. He returned to the fort, but with a fresh contingent of seventeen men, went to meet the supply train. After crossing the bridge at Orange Creek, six miles away, they engaged the Indians for an hour before the latter broke off the engagement. Alburtis then met the train and escorted it safely to the fort. Halleck-Tustenuggee suffered the loss of one sub-chief and three warriors killed. Two other warriors were wounded. This band operated from the haven of the Wahoo Swamp on the Withlacoochee, but ranged the area as far away as Lake George and Haw Creek. He had with him Powis-fixico (Short-Grass) and twelve of his warriors, considered to be " . . . the most active and cruel of any of the Indians."<sup>65</sup>

The area to the east of the St. Johns was the territory of Coacoochee (Wild Cat) who operated south from St. Augustine to the headwaters of the river. Coacoochee's band numbered some eighty warriors who " . . . doubtless committed more cruel

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

murders than any other in Florida."<sup>66</sup>

One of his targets was a theatrical train on the Picolata-- St. Augustine road. The Indians may well have been in need of clothing, for they stole all the baggage from the train and killed two of the company.

The Florida War became an object of national attention. A petition recommending the use of bloodhounds to track the Indian was submitted by a group of Indians residents on April 18, 1840.<sup>67</sup> About this time Colonel Fitzpatrick went to Havana and purchased thirty-three bloodhounds at a cost of one hundred fifty-one dollars and seventy-two cents each.<sup>68</sup> The hounds however, refused to track either Indian or Negro and the idea was dropped.

Another interesting solution involved the use of balloons in the war effort. Colonel John N. Sherburne wrote Secretary of War J. R. Poinsett on September 8, 1840, with a plan which involved four columns of four hundred men and one hundred horses each. Two columns were to leave from St. Augustine and Palatka, coordinating their progress. The two, on either side of the river, would remain about one mile apart, using the calvary as flankers. A balloon would be provided the columns on either side; in Sherburne's terms:

Each side was to be furnished with a suitable substantive balloon to be packed carefully and carried on a horse, and capable of taking up one person whose sic business it shall be exclusively to take charge of the Balloon and its fixtures and also to ascend at the proper time. On encamping at night

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>67</sup>Davis, p. 192.

<sup>68</sup>Sprague, p. 239.



the Balloon is to be inflated and at dark, sent up from 3 to five hundred feet above the trees, and made fast by a suitable rope.

Other equipment included a compass, a tablet for note taking, and small lines used to convey messages between the ground and the balloon when in ascent. Glasses would also be part of the equipment, used for spotting Indian camps at night, and for observation during the day.<sup>69</sup>

Sherburne received a letter from one Charles F. Durant, 12 Courtland Street, New York, in October, 1840, stating he had a balloon and would sell it for six hundred dollars. Another like it could be built for nine hundred dollars.

Poinsett wrote Sherburne on January 28, 1841, that the commander in Florida, General Armistead, ". . . considers this means of reconnoitering inapplicable to that country and declines positively to use them."<sup>70</sup>

Sherburne chased Durant all over New England to discuss the plan, but missed him on several occasions at Newark, Worcester and New London. He wrote Poinsett again, stating he'd discussed the plan with

. . . our mutual friend B. F. Butler Esq . . . (who at once was so well pleased with the plan that he expressed himself warmly on the subject . . . . [I will] take passage on the first vessel for Savannah, from there take the steamboat to Pilatka, and report confidentially to the Commanding General . . . .<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>From a letter in the National Archives, Washington, D. C.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

Whether he did is not known. Elaborate drawings of how to utilize the balloon accompanied the letters. Sherburne later claimed one hundred fifty-six dollars from the government for services rendered while assisting " . . . to terminate the Florida War from October 20 to November 14, 1840, and from February 22 to March 6, 1841."<sup>72</sup> F. Hartley Crawford informed Sherburne on February 1, 1845, that he had no justifiable claim.

During 1842 the Seminole was effectively driven from the middle St. Johns Valley, the area centering around Palatka. In January, Captain Silas Casey and a hundred men of the Second Infantry left Palatka for the headwaters of the St. Johns pursuing Halleck-Tustemuggee, but he eluded the force. His stronghold had been discovered near the mouth of Haw Creek on Dunn's Lake (Lake Crescent) where he and his thirty-five warriors were hiding. Another contingent of the Second, sixty strong, under Major Plympton, embarked in boats to intercept the band. They captured Powis-Mixico on January 25, near Spring Garden in a surprise attack on Halleck-Tustemuggee. The chief escaped across Lake George, despite another manuever to intercept him by a third force under Lieutenant Wessels from Fort King.<sup>73</sup>

On April 29, 1842, Halleck-Tustemuggee met Colonel W. J. Worth, who had relieved General Armistead on May 31, 1841, as commander of the forces in Florida, at Warm Springs. Speaking through his interpreter, Prinus, the chief told Worth that he agreed to cease fighting. "I have given you my hand, and now

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Sprague, p. 430.

my heart, in friendship, and what I have said shall be done."<sup>74</sup>

Three men were sent to Haw Creek to confiscate the plunder of Halleck-Tustenuggee's band. They discovered large quantities of calico cloth, cotton blankets and five containers of gunpowder concealed in hollow trees, holes in the ground and small sheds made of palmetto in the swamp. Halleck-Tustenuggee embarked for the Indian Territories on July 14, 1842.<sup>75</sup>

Several factors hampered the effectiveness of the army operations in Florida. Communication and transportation were two of these, but administrative problems persisted as well, determined by the frequency of changes in commanders. There was not much coordination of effort as regards the operations of the regulars and the volunteer groups as evidenced by the release of the militia from active duty on April 20, 1841, with many howls of consternation.

As the regular army assumed full responsibility for the conduct of the war, a semblance of bureaucracy appeared in the valley. There were two chief hospitals, one at Cedar Key and another at Picolata. The latter, with Garey's Ferry, was a supply depot during the early years, but by late 1840, the chief distribution center in the valley was Palatka. Supplies were sent to the interior on wagons which were escorted by both dragoons and infantry units. The civilian contingent hired by the army was considerable as well; one thousand and sixty civilians were employed by the military, primarily involved in transportation,

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 464.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 482.

TABLE 6

UNITED STATES TROOPS IN FLORIDA, 1836-41<sup>a</sup>

Date	Commanding Officer	Regulars Officers Men	Volunteers <sup>b</sup> Officers Men	Total	Unfit for Duty
November 30---					
1836	Jesup	26	1681	--- 3549	5166 ---
1837	Jesup	230	4322	225 3825 <sup>c</sup>	8866 458
1838	Taylor	202	3098	16 355 <sup>d</sup>	3671 288
1839	Taylor	186	2815	33 760 <sup>e</sup>	3824 300
1840	Armistead	227	3964	59 1784 <sup>f</sup>	6034 320
1841	Worth	186	3615	--- ---	3801 659

<sup>a</sup>Sprague, p. 103ff.

<sup>b</sup>Volunteers were from Alabams, Florida, Tennessee, Washington City and Creek Indians. The figures for 1836 include eighteen officers and three hundred and three men of the United States Marine Corps under Colonel Huslun.

<sup>c</sup>These figures include four Indian officers and one hundred and seventy-four men.

<sup>d</sup>Florida and Georgia provided these volunteers.

<sup>e</sup>These volunteers were called "Florida Mounted Men."

<sup>f</sup>Volunteers from Florida and Georgia.

operating three hundred and eighty wagons, five steamboats, three sailing vessels and twelve hundred and sixty mules along with thirteen hundred and seventy-three horses.<sup>76</sup>

Illness plagued operations. In March, 1842, eight hundred and eighty soldiers were sick, twenty-one of whom died. For April the figures are five hundred sixty ill, with eleven deaths. In May four hundred and twenty were unfit for duty while twenty-nine succumbed.<sup>77</sup>

In tracing the build-up of men and the assumption of operations by the regular army, it was apparent that a great effort at great expense, in terms of life and dollar, went into the war.

The importance of Palatka during the Second Seminole War was more significant after 1838, when Fort Shannon was established. This served to stimulate activity in the area and provided the first large scale development of what eventually culminated in the town's beginnings.

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 473.

## CHAPTER IX. FORT SHANNON

Brigadier General Thomas S. Jesup wrote Secretary of War Poinsett on August 14, 1837, "Any vessel that can be brought up the river to Jacksonville can be taken to Palatka . . . preferable to any port on the river . . . . It is . . . an open, dry and healthy site."<sup>1</sup> Jesup wrote from Garey's Ferry, near the junction of Black Creek and the St. Johns. Garey's Ferry was an early port for receiving supplies and men relative to the war effort. In August and September of 1837, supplies arrived directly from Philadelphia. (One could speculate on the effect of the Florida War on the expansion of supply facilities further south, such as Savannah and Charleston.)

Palatka occupied a strategic position in East Florida. There was a ferry there providing the link for one road which became more important, that between St. Augustine and Fort King. The road eventually was completed through to Fort Brooke on Tampa Bay.

The river had a tremendous potential as the most efficient means of deployment into the interior theatre of operations. Eventually, a break-in-transport point developed at Palatka as the seat of war pushed further to the south. An ocean-going vessel could navigate the St. Johns as far as Palatka, but not above the place. Smaller vessels were used to re-transport goods and materials to their ultimate destination.

TABLE 7

EARLY STEAMBOATS ON THE ST. JOHNS RIVER<sup>a</sup>

Steamboat	Description
"General Clinch"	Built in Charleston in 1839. The "Clinch" was one hundred thirty-one feet long, twenty-four feet wide and had a draft of eight feet and eight inches, displacing two hundred and fifty-six tons.
"Santee"	Also built in Charleston, in 1835. It displaced one hundred and seventy tons.
"Ivanhoe"	Built in 1839 at Savannah, with a displacement of one hundred and twenty-one tons.
"William Gaston"	Built in New York in 1836. The "Gaston" was a sister to the "St. Mathews" which displaced one hundred and seventy-four tons, with a length of one hundred twenty feet, a beam of twenty-two feet and two inches, and a draft of seven feet. The "Gaston" inaugurated bi-weekly packet service between Savannah and Palatka in 1843.
"Sarah Spaulding"	One of the first built on the St. Johns, in Jacksonville. It displaced fifty-five tons and was one hundred thirty-two feet in length, having a beam of twenty-five feet, ten inches and a draft of eight feet, five inches.
"Ocanulgee"	A vessel of two hundred sixty-four tons.

<sup>a</sup>Mueller, p. 249ff.

Palatka's location, as noted by Jesup, was favorable due to the elevation of the land, although swampland completely surrounded what is now the main business district. The place was militarily strategic as well, because of the narrow characteristics of the river just above the town.

Steamboat activity had already appeared and ultimately assumed a more important role than vessels equipped with sails. Part of the reason for this was attributed to the fact that there were constantly shifting sand bars due to the tidal fluctuation and, being more maneuverable and of lesser draft, the steamboat was ideally suited to navigation on the river.

The arrival of the "Gaston" at Palatka was an event to remember; it was celebrated with dining and dancing in the village. The "Sarah Spaulding" was the first civilian vessel to make regular trips between Palatka and Enterprise on Lake Monroe. The captain was a man named Bailey.

A terminal was developed at Palatka, and cautious optimists held that in 1847 Palatka was ". . . a rapidly growing town tending to outstrip Jacksonville for the time being."<sup>1</sup>

Exactly when the military depot at Palatka was constructed remains to be determined. No plan of the fort has been discovered. Initially it was referred to as Fort Pilatka, and the first monthly post return was for June of 1838. The commanding officer was Captain E. Backus of the First Regular Infantry. Seven officers were assigned the post, three of whom were absent at the time of the muster. Companies "B" and "G", with two

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<sup>1</sup>Mueller, p. 252.



sergeants, one corporal, one bugler and twenty-four privates, rounded out the muster list. Not all the post returns contain comment relative to the operation of the post, and little can be determined from them other than what units were present, and when, and the number of men involved.

The first troops assigned the post were responsible for erecting the structure; in his July report, Captain Backus revealed that the ". . . whole command was employed erecting Temporary Quarters."<sup>2</sup> & <sup>3</sup> There were five officers, with five others absent, but there was no reference as to whether they were accounted for. The enlisted contingent consisted of two sergeants, one corporal, one bugler, and twenty-seven privates. One sergeant, a musician and twelve privates were absent, but accounted for, probably on temporary assignment in the area.

The August return revealed that one hundred men and five officers manned the post. One, Lieutenant William H. Storer, was absent for reasons of health.

The return for September indicated that the contingent had been increased to a total of one hundred and twelve men, including officers. These were members of Companies "A", "G" and "H" of the First Infantry Regiment. Eight of these were officers, four of whom were absent. Storer was now recorded as being absent without leave since September 1. The post was abandoned on the nineteenth, and the complement removed en toto to

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<sup>2</sup>U.S., Post Returns of Fort Shannon, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives (Microfilm).

<sup>3</sup>Author's Note: All information in this chapter is based on the Fort Shannon Post Returns except where noted.

Picolata, arriving there on the same day. Backus assumed the command of that post.

When Palatka was reoccupied is not known. An undated entry lists eight officers assigned, with Storer still absent without leave, and also that Second Lieutenant A. H. Stewart had been absent without leave since August. Nothing more was said about these two individuals as regards their status.

No report was found for the months of October, November or December, 1838, or January, 1839.

A change of command was noted in the February, 1839, report. Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. W. Fanning, Fourth Artillery, was in charge. Company "E" of the Fourth Artillery and Company "F" of the Second Dragoons, Captain Townshend Dade, Company Commander, were in attendance, one hundred twenty-nine men all told. Possibly this company commander was related to Major Dade, who was killed with his command in 1835.

No change was noted for the March return.

In April, the command was given to Captain Dade who had his company of fifty-nine men present, along with forty-nine men of the Seventh Infantry. Comment revealed that Captain Nathaniel Bateman had taken Company "D" of the Seventh Infantry to Fort Brooke.

Dade held the command during May, 1839, but the number of men had been reduced to one hundred and eight.

The June return indicated no change.

The July report identified the units present. The same number of men was present, and the units were Dade's Company "F",

Second Dragoons, totalling sixty men, and Company "D" of the Seventh Infantry, forty-five men strong.

The return for August lists the same two companies present, but there were two less men in the former and one in the latter. Dade still held command, but the post was identified as "Fort Number Five." This can be attributed to Taylor's proposal to sector off the territory as previously noted. Palatka was in the center of Military Square Number Five.

The two companies referred to were still posted in Palatka in September, however there was another change of command. Lieutenant W.J. Hardee, Second Dragoons, was now in charge of the post; Captain Dade had been arrested on September 27, relative to Paragraph Two of an unidentified order which originated at The Headquarters of The Army of The South on September 21, 1839. No reason or further reference regarding the arrest was noted. The strength of the command was reduced to ninety-six men, fifty-four of whom were in Company "D" of the Second Dragoons.

There was no return for October, 1839.

First Lieutenant N. W. Hunter commanded the post in November, manned by one hundred and fourteen men.

Hunter was still in command in December. He was a member of Company "F", Second Dragoons, which, with Company "D" of the Second Infantry, comprised the complement of one hundred and twenty-seven men.

The January, 1840, return referred to the post as Square Number Five at Pilatka. One hundred and thirty men were present; the units were: Company "D", Second Regiment of Dragoons; Company

"D", Seventh Regiment of Infantry; Company "E" of the Second Dragoons, relieving "F" Company on the seventh upon arrival; and Company "G" of the Seventh Infantry. These latter two were staff companies primarily indicating the increased supply function of the post.

Companies "D", Second Regiment of Dragoons; "E", Second Dragoons; and "G", Seventh Infantry composed the complement during February. The post return indicated that the installation was identified as Fort Number Five, Palatka. Captain James A. Ashby commanded the one hundred thirty men present. Ashby noted on the return that in compliance with Order Number Nine, Army of the South, dated February 7, 1840, Company "D" of the Seventh Infantry had moved to Fort Holmes. Holmes was located fifteen miles west of Palatka on the road to Fort King, near Deep Creek.

It was still Fort Number Five, Palatka, in March. Present were Company "D" of the Second Regiment of Dragoons, and Company "G" of the Seventh Infantry. The garrison had been reinforced on February 19 by First Lieutenant Bates and nineteen men of Captain Fitzgerald's Company of Florida Volunteers. This was the only reference to volunteer units manning, at least in part, the fort. On March 20, Bates was ordered to reoccupy Fort Lawson, five miles to the west of Palatka, indicating that Fort Lawson existed prior to this time.

The April and May reports indicate only figures; the film was illegible or the returns were damaged. There were seventy-four men present for each month however.

The returns for June and July indicate that Major James A. Ashby commanded seventy-one men at the fort.

Ashby also was in command in August. There were sixty-nine men present, as well as the Deputy Quartermaster General, Thomas F. Hunt.

In September, 1840, the smallest number of men present was recorded. Only fifty-five troops manned the post. These men comprised Company "D" of the Second Dragoons, Major Ashby commanding.

Ashby apparently held the permanent rank of captain, but was promoted to Brevet-Major according to the return for October (a brevet rank was given for meritorious service.) He commanded one hundred and forty-six men.

Major T. T. Fauntleroy relieved Brevet-Major Ashby on November 17. Fauntleroy was also an officer of the Second Dragoons. The post was manned by one hundred and thirty troops.

Two changes in command occurred in December, 1840. On the thirtieth, Lieutenant C. A. May and Company "G" arrived to relieve Lieutenant Rodgers and Company "E" of the Second Dragoons. Also present was Company "I" of the Second Infantry, a total, including staff members, of one hundred and twenty-two men.

Lieutenant May and the same units occupied the fort during January, 1841, although there were four fewer men present.

The contingent nearly quadrupled during February; Captain Croghan Ker commanded four hundred and eight men, including eight members each of the Field and General Staff. This was the largest contingent to man the fort. Ker relieved May on February 27.

All the troops were members of calvary units, Companies "A", "D", "E", "G", "H" and "K" of the Second Dragoons.

Some rotation occurred in March; the complement was still the Second Dragoons, but Company "C" replaced Company "K". Ashby commanded the three hundred ninety-five troops present, including nine staff members.

By April, the force had been reduced to two hundred and sixty men. No other specifics were reported.

In May, Ashby commanded two hundred and fifty-seven men of the Second Dragoons, Companies "C", "D", "G" and "H".

The command reverted to Major Fauntleroy in June and the force was reduced to one hundred and ninety men.

A much more complete breakdown of the complement was included in the July, 1841, return. There were two hundred and twelve men present, all of companies "B", "H" and "K" of the Second Dragoons. Included were one major (un-named, but probably Fauntleroy, for he was identified as the commander for both June and August), one adjutant, one surgeon (the first reference to such an individual), two captains, two second lieutenants, one sergeant-major, nine sergeants, ten corporals, one principal musician, two chief buglers, four buglers, two farmers, two blacksmiths, and ninety-eight privates. Who the remaining individuals were was not indicated.

Fauntleroy also commanded the post in August. There were two hundred and six men present.

Two hundred and two troops of the Second Dragoons manned the post in September. Major Fauntleroy was still in command.

On September 1, a General Courts-Martial convened, but the individual(s) and charge(s) were not specified. Niles' Register dated May 23, 1840, referred to the mutiny of a company of men at Picolata; an accompanying article was captioned "Further concerning the mutiny at Pilatka." This may have instigated the courts-martial, however it is questionable, for military justice usually moved somewhat swifter than a sixteen month time differential.<sup>4</sup>

A more likely reason was also found in Niles' Register. Lieutenant Thayer of the Second Dragoons committed suicide at Palatka on September 16. No details were given however. The Second Dragoons were stationed at Palatka temporarily during the month.<sup>5</sup>

The return for October, 1841, was the first to refer to the post as Fort Shannon. Lieutenant M. R. Patrick commanded the post, relieving his predecessor on the twelfth. Sixty-eight men were present, specifically Company "F" of the Second Infantry which included one surgeon, one first lieutenant, one brevet-second lieutenant, three sergeants, three corporals, one fifer and forty-four privates.

The headquarters of the Second Infantry was to be established at Pilatka according to the post return for November. First Lieutenant James W. Penrose was relieved by Lieutenant-Colonel B. Riley, Second Infantry, on the twenty-second in compliance with General Order Number Seventy-two, dated November 8, 1841, at the Headquarters, Army of Florida.

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<sup>4</sup>Davis, p. 193.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 209.

Riley commanded the post in December, when one hundred and twelve men were present. Members of the Second Infantry Field Staff were counted, in addition to Companies "B", "C", and "H" of the Second Dragoons, and detachments from the First Infantry, the Sixth Infantry and the Third Artillery.

Riley continued his command of the post in January, February and March, 1842, with two hundred present in January, two hundred and seventy-eight in February, and two hundred and fifteen in March. Fort Shannon apparently was not the only military function in Palatka. Included in the March, 1842, report is a comment by Riley: "There is no amount of Subsistence--V<sup>g</sup>-- [vegetables] on hand at this post and the supplies for immediate use [are] being drawn from the depot at Palatka." Another item of interest was the spelling of Palatka; it was one of the first occasions on which the name was spelled as at present.

In April, two hundred and ninety-five men were present.

May found Captain W. R. Montgomery, Eighth Infantry, relieving Lieutenant-Colonel Riley on the twenty-fifth. "K" Company, Eighth Infantry, relieved the Headquarters of the Second Infantry on the twenty-third. The return included General Order Number Three, dated May 1, 1842, which defined the limits of the Oklawaha and St. Johns Military Districts. Eighty-four men were present.

Major William G. Belknap relieved Captain Montgomery on June 7 as commander. There were one hundred and eleven men present. Belknap retained command of the post until October, 1842. A comment included in the return for this month referred to another General Courts-Martial, but no specifics accompanied



the reference. Once again Niles provided food for thought. He reported in his Register dated June 22, that Major D. Wilcox had died at Palatka. No particulars were given.<sup>6</sup>

During July, one hundred and seventy-five men were accounted for. The comment for this return included a reference to First Lieutenant John T. Sprague as having accompanied Colonel W. J. Worth who later commanded the Army of Florida. Sprague wrote probably the best account of the Second Seminole War, entitled The Florida War, published in 1848.

The August return showed Belknap commanding three hundred and nine men.

Field and staff officers of the Eighth Infantry were present in September. Major Belknap was in charge of the post, two hundred fifty-six strong, which included Companies "E", "F" and "G", Eighth Infantry, and elements of the Second Dragoons, First Artillery and the First and Fourth Infantry. General Order Number Thirty-Two established a General Courts-Martial to convene on the fifteenth. One company of the Eighth Infantry was to remove to Fort Brooke on the twenty-sixth in accordance with General Order Number One Hundred Twelve.

This removal appeared on the October post return, when two hundred and eight troops manned the position; Company "E" was now listed as being at Fort Brooke. One officer accompanied the sixty-five men. Companies "F" and "G", the Eighth Infantry Field and Staff Officers, and detachments of the Fourth and Eighth Infantry completed the muster list.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

Surgeon Wright was assigned to Fort Shannon in November, 1842, and another surgeon named Craig was assigned to Fort Brooke according to the return for that month. Two hundred and eighty-six men, Captain Joseph S. Worth, commanding, comprised the complement. Companies "E", "F" and "G" of the Eighth Infantry were present.

Worth relinquished the command to Captain George Wright on December 3. Wright in turn was succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel Newman S. Clarke, Eighth Infantry, on the twenty-seventh. One hundred and ninety-two men were present.

Clarke continued to command during January, 1843. There were one hundred and ninety-seven troops present. These represented Companies "F" and "G", Eighth Infantry, the staff and detachments of the Fourth Infantry. General Order Number Seventy-Nine ordered a court of inquiry at Palatka. About this time, Captain James M. Hill was relieved by Captain George G. Waggaman of his quartermaster duties.

Clarke held the command in February. Three hundred and thirteen men were present. These were assigned to Companies "A", "F", "G" and "H" of the Eighth Infantry. A detachment of the Fourth Infantry was also present. Company "H", fifty-four men and one officer strong, arrived on the seventeenth. Company "A" reported on the twenty-seventh, one officer commanding sixty-four men. Once again, reference to a courts-martial was made. Further comment referred to the detachment of First Lieutenant John T. Sprague, Company "A", Eighth Infantry, but no indication as to which unit he reported to was included.

The contingent dropped to sixty-seven men in March. Worth assumed command again on March 24. On that day Companies "A" and "H" left for St. Augustine. Company "F" marched to Key West the day before, leaving only Company "G" of the Eighth Infantry at the station. There were 25,000 rations in the store-rooms which apparently alleviated the shortage as per above.

Company "C" and detachments of the Sixth Infantry joined Company "G" in April. A total of one hundred and twenty-eight men, commanded by Worth, were at the post.

The same companies were present in May, June and July, however there were eight fewer men. On July 14, an order was received to withdraw the force at Fort Russell on the nineteenth. The troops were to go to Fort Lawson and Fort Brooke. The post return for July showed that there were one hundred and nineteen men at Fort Shannon for the month.

Each post return indicated the number of troops present (officers and men); the number who enlisted for service during the month; how many terms of enlistment expired; how many died; the number of desertions; and the number of recruits needed to bring the garrison up to strength.

The greatest concentration of troops was in February, 1841, while the smallest was in September, 1840. There were thirty-two enlistments, the highest figure, in December, 1839. Nineteen terms expired in September, 1840, another high, which probably accounted for the small contingent present. Only one was reported to have died in action, in October, 1840, and the highest number of deaths, four, was recorded in January, 1841.

Five men deserted in September, 1842, the highest figure for that category, and the number of recruits needed was highest in August, 1842, when it was indicated that the garrison was one hundred and eighteen men under strength. There were three hundred and nine present for that month. One man was dismissed in July, 1841, however no reason was given.

A total of seventy-five men enlisted at the post. This reflected on the number of people in the valley during the period; that the town was growing cannot be refuted.

Ninety-four enlistments expired. Thirty-seven men died, all except one from causes other than those suffered in action, and thirty-eight men deserted, one of whom did so during the last month of the post's existence.

The figures are sketchy; the returns were not always complete, or were in several instances illegible. One thing was certain, Fort Shannon served primarily a transient function, again pointing out the strategic importance of Palatka's location on the river. The high turnover in the command of the post reflects on the staging area nature of the fort.

At no time was a Captain Shannon, or any Shannon for that matter, stationed at the post. It must be kept in mind that there probably were two facilities at Palatka; the fort itself, and the supply division. This latter was referred to in the post return for March, 1842, and the frequent mention of quartermaster people suggest this.

Fort Shannon, or Fort Pilatka, or Fort Number Five served a hospital function as well.

TABLE 8

## FORT SHANNON POST RETURNS

Year/Month	Number of Men Present	Number of Enlistments	Number of Expirations	Number Died	Number Deserted	Recruits Needed
1838--						
June	110					
July	175		2			
August	100		3	2		85
September	112		3			76
October						
November						
December						
1839--						
January						
February	129					27
March	129		1			27
April	108					59
May						
June	105		2	2		64
July	105				1	65
August	102	3				67
September	96		5		1	23
October						
November	114	19	13		1	53
December	127	32	18	1		39
1840--						
January	130		2		1	41
February	79					
March						
April	74	1				
May	74		2		1	3
June	71					3
July	71					
August	69	2	5			
September	55	3	19			22
October	146	1	8	1		8
November	130		1	2		
December	122	1	1	1	3	47

TABLE 8--CONTINUED

Year/Month	Number of Men Present	Number of Enlistments	Number of Expiration	Number Died	Number Deserted	Recruits Needed
1841--						
January	118			4		51
February	408	2	1	3	1	54
March	395	2	6	2	4	66
April	260	2		3	1	50
May	257	2			1	52
June	190	2		1	3	43
July	212		1	3	1	18
August	206			1	2	24
September	202			3	2	31
October	68			1		27
November	137			1		17
December	112	3				
1842--						
January	200			1		38
February	278		1			66
March	215					43
April	295	1				57
May	84			2	1	
June	111			1		34
July	175				1	56
August	309					118
September	256				5	
October	208			1		
November	286				1	
December	192			1	2	
1843--						
January	197				3	
February	313				1	
March	167					
April	128					
May	120					
June	119					
July	119				1	
TOTALS		75	94	37	38	

TABLE 9

RECORDED DEATHS, MILITARY FORCES AT PALATKA<sup>a</sup>

Regiment, Name & Rank	Co.	Date	Cause
<u>Second Dragoons</u>			
Chase, Edward T., Pvt.	C	6- 5-41	Remittant Fever
*Collins, William, Pvt.	G	2-13-41	Unknown Disease
McCrarh, John K., Pvt.	F	12-28-40	Debility
Stevens, Thomas, Pvt.	A	5-11-41	Unknown Disease
*Smith, William, Pvt.	A	8- 4-41	" "
*Sibolski, Jacob, Pvt.	F	6- 2- 39	Dysentary
Wagner, William, Pvt.	K	9-21-41	Unknown Disease
<u>Third Artillery</u>			
Ryan, Thomas, Pvt.	H	6-25-38	" "
<u>Fourth Artillery</u>			
Spawassen, Fred, Pvt.	G	8-12-38	" "
<u>Second Infantry</u>			
*Allen, Thomas, Pvt.	A	12-22-41	Consumption
*Baum, Henry, Pvt.	E	12- 7-41	Tetanus
*Chapman, James, Pvt.	B	3- 4-42	Chronic dysentary
*Maynard, John J., Pvt.	I	11- 8-41	Dropsy
*McBride, Edward, Pvt.	I	1- 1-42	Dysentary
*Wells, John W., Pvt.	K	2- 4-42	Disease of the brain
<u>Fifth Infantry</u>			
Wilcox, D., Major		1- 3-42	Disease contracted in Florida
<u>Seventh Infantry</u>			
Garrett, T. B., 2nd Lt.	E	10-30-41	Yellow fever
Stephenson, R., Capt.		11-26-41	Unknown Disease
*Coglan, Daniel, Pvt.	D	1-30-40	" "
<u>Eighth Infantry</u>			
Cooper, Thomas, Pvt.	C	10-11-42	Disease incident to climate and severe service
Elliott, Stephen, Pvt.	D	12-10-42	" "
Schwartz, Andrew, Pvt.	C	8-20-42	" "
*Scott, Philip, Pvt.	G	12-14-42	" "
Wilcox, Augustus, Pvt.	E	12-29-42	" "
<u>Medical Officers</u>			
Elives, A. W., Surgeon		6-12-42	Disease contracted in Florida

\*Died at Ft. Shannon; all others died in Palatka.

<sup>a</sup>John T. Sprague, The Florida War (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964) Appendix.

Thirty-seven men died according to the post returns, and Sprague provides the names for twenty-five of these. All the deaths were attributed to causes toher than those suffered in battle, implying that a hospital function existed. With an operation as extensive as Shannon was, it is not unlikely however, that only clinical services were available, considering the numbers of deaths and the number of men stationed there; the ratio is not that high.

General Armistead was directed by the War Department on December 3, 1840, to keep the incapacitated men of his command at either Cedar Keys, Pilatka, St. Augustine or Tampa until spring.<sup>7</sup>

More evidence that the post may have served a dual purpose was intimated in a letter from the War Department to General Armistead dated May 13, 1840; it was recommended that "Pilatka" should be a military post manned by regulars.<sup>8</sup>

Niles' Register reported on August 22, 1840, that General Armistead would make his headquarters at " . . .the new depot in Pilatka. The change being made for economy and facility of transportation."<sup>9</sup> Whether this actually occurred is not known. Nothing in the returns reflected this.

Another account held that a "large hospital," eight block-houses, barracks and a stable to accommodate four hundred horses comprised the post, all of which were constructed by 1840. The

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<sup>7</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 231.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>9</sup>Davis, p. 197.



post was enlarged by order of the President on February 19, 1841. All land in the vicinity was declared a military reservation, which, according to the account, was relinquished by the War Department on April 6, 1880.<sup>10</sup>

Norton supports the contention holding that there were eight blockhouses on Water Street, one of which had a tower eighty feet high. The headquarters was located near the DeVall House, the stables on the Putnam House grounds, and the hospital where Hart's home later stood.<sup>11</sup>

Another account reiterated this physical description of the fort. Five of the eight blockhouses were reputedly burned in Palatka's fire of 1855.<sup>12</sup>

An attempt was made to make Fort Shannon a permanent military outpost on September 22, 1842, in a communication from Thomas J. Blake, Surveyor General of Florida, to Secretary of War J. C. Spencer.<sup>13</sup> However, the post was abandoned on August 24, 1843, without reservation status.<sup>14</sup> Blake wrote a year later (September 26, 1843\_ to William H. Simmons stating that General Worth had received several letters from citizens who applied

<sup>10</sup>Martin, p. 191.

<sup>11</sup>Charles Ledyard Norton, A Handbook of Florida (New York: Longmans Green and Company, 1890) p. 189.

<sup>12</sup>Wanton S. Webb (ed.), Webb's Historical, Industrial and Biographical Florida.

<sup>13</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 543.

<sup>14</sup>U.S., Outline Index, Military Forts and Reservations, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, National Archives.

for land under the Armed Occupation Act.<sup>15</sup> Worth stated, "Palatka has ceased to be occupied as a military post and the buildings erected thereon abandoned to the proprietor of the soil agreeable to contract, nor is it at all probable that it will ever be occupied again." Blake wanted to know of General Worth ". . . the precise period at which Palatka ceased to be a permanent military post . . . ." <sup>16</sup>

Niles reflected on the deactivation of Fort Shannon. He states on March 11, 1843, that the fort (Palatka) was to be discontinued. On April 15, he declared April 14, 1843, to be the date of abandonment.<sup>17</sup> This has been clarified above.

In May, 1841, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Whiting, Deputy Quartermaster, commanded that department in Florida from Palatka. Whiting relieved Colonel T. Cross in 1839. He had thirteen assistants on duty, but not all these were at Palatka. The principal depot was indicated as being at Cedar Keys, under the command of Captain John B. Grayson.<sup>18</sup> Whiting was relieved by

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<sup>15</sup>Passed August 4, 1842. Anyone who settled one hundred and sixty acres of "hitherto unoccupied land" south of a line drawn from Palatka to Gainesville for a seven year period would be given the title to it. Nine hundred and fifty-three patents were issued at Newmansville and three hundred sixty-eight at St. Augustine. Few titles today can be traced to this act. Frederick W. Dau, Florida Old and New (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1934) p. 230ff.

<sup>16</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 745ff.

<sup>17</sup>Davis, p. 221.

<sup>18</sup>Sprague, p. 275.

Lieutenant-Colonel T. F. Hunt on March 12, 1842.<sup>19</sup>

The extent of the operation and the cost of the war effort instigated economy measures. A letter from Adjutant General S. Cooper to Whiting in August, 1841, indicated that horses were " . . . the heaviest item of expense."<sup>20</sup> Seven hundred and three civilians were employed by the department, many of whom, according to the letter, were to be discharged, " . . . except those you deem necessary at the principal depots . . . ." <sup>21</sup> Palatka was one of these. There were to be no hired mechanics at the "petty posts," and an overall reduction in the number of clerks was ordered. Whiting responded to Cooper's letter on August 23. He indicated that (in the Palatka area) Fort Holmes had been broken-up. There were three teamsters and a cartman at Fort Mellon, and three teamsters, one express rider, one hostler and one clerk at Fort Russell.<sup>22</sup> He indicated that there was a great need for mechanics and laborers at Palatka.<sup>23</sup>

Further reductions were made in March, 1842. Order Number Four, dated March 6, directed that all public horses were to be turned in to Whiting's Quartermaster Department. In addition, Fort Fanning would be discontinued for use as a depot; the Florida posts were to be supplied from Cedar Keys and Palatka. All hired clerks were to be discharged immediately, except for

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 515.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 305.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 306.

<sup>22</sup>Named for Captain Samuel Russell, shot by Indians near Key Biscayne on February 28, 1839. Speculation on this example could indicate Shannon was also an early victim.

<sup>23</sup>Sprague, p. 306ff.

those of the two remaining posts.

Supply was a problem. On September 17, 1841, Cooper wrote Captain J. A. Bradford of the Ordnance Department at Palatka instructing him to ". . . issue secondhand arms to the settlers for their protection. . . and only such quantities of ammunition that will suffice for defence."<sup>24</sup>

Hezekiah L. Thistle, agent for the preservation of timber in Florida, wrote Secretary of the Navy A. P. Usher on May 22, 1842, also referring to the supply problem: "I could procure neither of these articles, (arms, ammunition, tents) not even a pound of Gunpowder. Colonel Worth was not at the post, and I have not had an interview with him since I have been in Florida."<sup>25</sup>

The following month Thistle again wrote Usher, this time announcing a government sale of horses and mules at Palatka on June 27.<sup>26</sup>

Fort Shamon was basically a post dealing with logistics. Field activity in the strict sense was nearly minimal, and then primarily before the middle of 1842. As the theatre of operations moved south, it became apparent that in any capacity, Palatka was too far removed from the scene. The only field activity was Captain Casey's chase of Halleck-Tustenuggee. Cooper instructed Colonel Riley at Palatka to assist Casey with all the men in his command, except for fifteen who would remain

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<sup>24</sup>Uncataloged manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

<sup>25</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 411.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 489.

at the post. A detachment was to be sent by steamboat directly from Palatka to New Smyrna.<sup>27</sup>

In February, Cooper directed Lieutenant Patrick to protect a number of " . . . people anxious of forming a colony at Fort Mellon."<sup>28</sup> By the middle of the year Indian depredations were a thing of the past. In another year even the supply function would have outlived itself.

Fort Shannon figured prominently as the instigating factor leading to the development of Palatka despite its few short years' existence.

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<sup>27</sup>Sprague, p. 391ff.

<sup>28</sup>Uncataloged manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

## CHAPTER X. GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Military operations in the area stimulated a great influx of men to Palatka even if only for a short period of time. The supply facility stabilized the continued existence of Shannon especially due to the practice of hiring civilians to fulfill many aspects of the quartermaster function. This caused growth; an aura of permanence existed, due to the construction of facilities such as warehouses and piers. It meant the construction of roads, which for the first time provided a more efficient means of transport into the interior. The clearing of obstructions in the rivers also enhanced the potential of this frontier area.

Nearly all of this was provided initially by the military. When Fort Shannon was deactivated, it meant the end of maintenance for roads and waterways. It meant that the responsibility had to be taken over by civilian authority. This could result only by demand, and the demand was made by the increasing number of people in the area. This resulted in the emergence of civilian government initially as representatives of the Federal Government, due to the territorial status of Florida. One of the first to assume what was to be a tremendous influence on the area was a man named Issac Bronson.

President Van Buren appointed Issac H. Bronson Judge of the Superior Court of the Eastern District of Florida on March 10, 1840. The appointment was confirmed the following day for a

term of four years. Bronson accepted the position on March 19.<sup>1</sup> He apparently made a favorable impression on the residents of his district. James D. Westcott wrote the President on July 7, 1840, that Judge Bronson " . . . pleases all parties here . . . ." <sup>2</sup>

An indication of who resided in Palatka in the early 1840's can be determined from a petition to Congress protesting the appointment of David Levy as a delegate to Congress on the grounds that Levy was an alien " . . . owing allegiance and fealty to a Foreign Power . . . ." <sup>3</sup> Levy was born on the Danish island of St. Thomas in the West Indies on June 2, 1810. He'd never applied for naturalization, according to the petition, although he had resided in Florida since 1829. He claimed citizenship by virtue of a supposed right of citizenship extended to his father, Moses E. Levy. Neither, claimed the petition, were citizens. The instrument was signed on May 24, 1841, by the following "Pilatkians":

TABLE 10

THE ANTI-LEVY PETITION<sup>a</sup>

Thomas S. Bryants	R. M. Porter	Henry W. Maxey
Henry Haskell	Bernardo Segui, Jr.	Darius Parkhurst
James Stevens	Thomas B. Fitzpatrick	Michael Neligan
J. B. Smith	Henry W. Rusch	David Connor
C. Bell	Richard M. Ratcliffe	J. M. Lakenan
A. W. Walker	James Hart	

<sup>a</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 317.

<sup>1</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 123ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 314ff.

Nationalism was obviously part of the opposition to Levy's appointment, but local regionalism also played a role, for Levy was a resident of the plantation country between the Appalachicola and the Suwannee Rivers. Over fifty per cent of Florida's population resided there when statehood was achieved. The "Palatkians" were interested in having more direct representation. This was one of the first attempts to gain and exercise political power on the part of the fledgling settlement.

Another petition in 1841 probably contained some Palatkians' signatures; this dealt with the establishment of a customs house at the mouth of the St. Johns River on the vessel "Hayard."

TABLE 11

THE CUSTOMS HOUSE PETITION<sup>a</sup>


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Henry A. Crane	J. A. Lakenan	B. Hagen
John Jones	James W. Lathrop	Thomas B. Fitzpatrick
C. Rosenplanter	J. B. Smith	H. W. Maxey
J. Weber	Richard N. Ratcliffe	John Chambers
W. Casnitt	W. H. Cohen	Joseph L. Dutton
Hugh Headner		

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<sup>a</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 431.

John J. Abert wrote the Secretary of War on January 18, 1843, stating that the shortest route for a railroad between the St. Johns and the Suwannee Rivers was from "Palatka" to Fort Fanning. He added that Palatka was now " . . . of easy access to the Atlantic."<sup>4</sup> Speculation such as this added to the development of Palatka.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 600.



An article in the National Intelligencer, May 18, 1843, incorporated a letter signed by "A Physician," and dated May 1, 1843. It read:

It is also well known that there are numerous positions . . . where even intermittent fevers are unknown, and where no endemic of any description prevails. Of these, Palatka . . . presents a striking instance. Palatka is probably one of the most favorable positions in the peninsular for persons laboring under pulmonary afflictions . . . .<sup>5</sup>

Here was a reiteration on what military men had already said about Palatka's location.

Another petition was signed in Palatka on January 26, 1843. This was to assure that the records, mostly in Spanish, of East Florida would remain at St. Augustine rather than being transferred to Tallahassee. There were four hundred and eighty-eight bundles containing 69,880 documents involved.

TABLE 12

THE RECORDS PETITION<sup>a</sup>


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James B. Cole	William Weston	S. Glincks
James H. Drown	Luke Johns	Meyer Helfer
Elias Burns	George W. Cole, Jr.	S. F. Halliday
Robert Dardes	W. H. Cohen	James Stevens
M. Stone	John Scott	A. Gantt
T. Steward	Fern Peck	Tobias Martin
R. W. Hunt	A. Smith	George W. Barnes
William Donoho	E. Hagen	William Brooke
Richard Russel	Adam Potts	A. W. Bell
William H. Prime	Henry Haskell	J. W. Smith
John Brady	P. White	J. Philipe
Mark Bates, Jr.	N. Ellis	William Clemons
Truman Hindle	Rufus L. King	John Dick

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<sup>a</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol, XXVI, 1839-45, p. 606.

Judge Bronson was sympathetic with the petitioners. His position was stated in a letter written from Tallahassee on January 25, 1843.<sup>6</sup>

By 1843 a report had it that the new population " . . . is flowing in . . . ." <sup>7</sup> People of some position were impressed with Palatka's potential. Valentine Y. Conway wrote to Surveyor General Blake in Tallahassee on May 25, 1843, that he'd just returned from an "excursion," having "reconnoitered" the whole country. He was having to:

. . . weigh deliberately the advantages of a change of location of the Office of the Surveyor General. My convictions are only divided between Palatka--beautifully situated on the St. Johns about fifteen miles from St. Augustine . . . and the city of St. Augustine.<sup>8</sup>

The petitioners committed themselves again on September 25, 1843. This time they wanted funds appropriated for a road between St. Augustine and Palatka.

The Legislative Council passed the following resolution in February, 1844: "Whereas the settlement of Palatka . . . is rapidly increasing in population and commerce . . . a road should be opened, leading from the St. Johns River opposite Palatka . . . to St. Augustine." Ten thousand dollars was appropriated.<sup>9</sup>

Another boost was given Palatka by the council on January 31, 1844; another \$10,000 was appropriated to repair the road from

<sup>6</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, P. 609.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 654.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 653.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 854.

"Pilatka" to Tampa Bay.<sup>10</sup>

TABLE 13

THE ROAD PETITION<sup>a</sup>


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James B. Cole (Postmaster)		
James Davis	S. Glincks	John Sparkman
William Donoho	William McElvey	Wade Sparkman
John Dick	Robert Dardis	James Finn
Richard H. Barrett	George J. Geyer	Patrick Connor
Charles H. Bell	Luke Johns	Charles W. Brush
H. S. Clark	William Thigpen	William Daniels
George W. Hunter	Peter Sparkman	C. Barber
Richard M. Ratcliffe	William H. Cohen	D. Finn
A. W. Bell	William Sparkman	Peter C. Zylstra

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<sup>a</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 737ff.

The re-establishment of the post office on a permanent basis on August 17, 1841, indicated an increase in population and greater permanence. James B. Cole was appointed as postmaster and served until October 30, 1948, when he was succeeded by Stanislaus Glincki. Glincki held the post until June 2, 1848, when Robert T. Boyd was appointed. Boyd served until January 29, 1850, stepping down in favor of Louis H. Rossignol.<sup>11</sup> The spelling of the name was "Pilatka," and so it remained, officially, until May 24, 1875, when it was changed to the current use.

President Tyler reappointed Judge Bronson to another term on March 8, 1844.<sup>12</sup> On August 12, 1844, Bronson swore in John

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<sup>10</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 847.

<sup>11</sup>Correspondence, Mathews.

<sup>12</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 871.

Branch of North Carolina as governor of the Territory of Florida.<sup>13</sup> Branch had been appointed on June 21 to a three year term. Florida achieved statehood before he served it to completion however. Other appointments for St. Johns and Musquito Counties were George R. Fairbanks as Clerk of the Superior Court, and Jesse A. Brush as deputy.<sup>14</sup>

In July, 1844, the convention of the East Florida Democrats was held in Palatka, and the platform adopted included the following planks; first, opposition to national banks; second, a plea for division of the territory; third, continue to fight the Seminoles until they were "exterminated"; and fourth, annexation of Texas.<sup>15</sup> Once again the nationalism was evident. Other "isms" which appeared to an extent included racism and regionalism and conservatism.

Meetings opposing statehood were also held during 1844 in Palatka. Two issues were similar to those mentioned above: slavery and the division of East and West Florida.<sup>16</sup> The residents had mixed emotions over entering the Union.

They had questions. So did Judge Bronson who wrote Robert J. Walker, Secretary of the Treasury, on March 28, 1845, from St. Augustine. Bronson wanted to know what would happen to his court when statehood was achieved. He contended that it, and all

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 943.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 683.

<sup>15</sup>Martin, p. 52.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

pending cases, would cease to exist. That must have made some individuals happy.<sup>17</sup>

Territorial Governor Branch called for elections to be held in May, 1845; the Democrats nominated William D. Moseley, a lawyer, planter and ex-politician from North Carolina. They also nominated David Levy as candidate for the House of Representatives in Congress. The Whigs offered Richard K. Call and Benjamin A. Putnam as the opposition. In an election tainted with plenty of liquid prompting on the part of the Democrats, Moseley and Levy were declared the victors. After Moseley retired, he resided in Palatka and was buried in Westview Cemetery.

Putnam was one of the principals in the Whig Party. He was the nephew of Israel Putnam of Revolutionary War fame. His father was an army surgeon during that war. Benjamin Alexander Putnam was born on the Putnam Plantation near Savannah in 1803; he was educated in the north, entering Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, in 1817, and Harvard in 1819. In 1823 he received his Bachelor of Laws Degree. After graduation, Putnam and his widowed mother went to St. Augustine where the young lawyer became affiliated with United States Territorial Judge James L. Smith, father of Edmund Kirby Smith. He married Helen Kirby, a sister-in-law of the judge, in 1830 at Charleston, and the following year their only child, Catharine, was born.

Putnam organized Independent Company "A" of Colonel Sanchez's

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<sup>17</sup>Carter, Territorial Papers . . . ., Vol. XXVI, 1839-45, p. 1032.

Second Regiment, Florida Militia, during the Second Seminole War, and assumed the rank of major. His biographer, R. M. Burt, credits him with having known Captain Samuel Shannon in his many forays along the St. Johns River. He reputedly was wounded in a skirmish with Indians in the "Big Scrub" and carried half a bullet in his leg thereafter. Patrick referred to him as an "unsuccessful military leader" in reference to his retreat from Bulow to St. Augustine during the war.<sup>18</sup>

In 1848 Putnam was elected to the General Assembly in Florida, eventually acceding to the Speaker's position. On January 11, 1849, a bill was introduced to create "Hilaka" County. On the second reading, Mr. Tanner moved to change the name from Hilaka to Putnam, and the motion carried. A Mr. Baldwin objected to the substitution but this failed and by a vote of twenty-six to one, Putnam County was created, with Palatka designated as the county seat. Tanner presumably wanted to name the county for the Speaker of the Assembly.

Putnam organized the State Historical Society in 1856 and was elected President that same year. The following year he was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Judge of the Eastern Circuit William A. Forward. He was elected to an eight year term in 1860. Putnam dropped the title of Major and assumed that of Judge. He was too old to participate in the Civil War and was a refugee in Madison for the duration. After the war, he moved to Palatka, purchasing the home of Joseph P. Webster on the corner

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<sup>18</sup>Rembert W. Patrick, Florida Under Five Flags (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1955) p. 37.

of Main and North First Streets in 1866. For the three years before he died, on January 25, 1869, Putnam and his nephew, James Burt, were active in the development of Palatka. Putnam was also interred in Westview Cemetery.

His daughter Catharine married Dr. John C. Calhoun, eldest son of the South Carolina politician, in 1849. When he died shortly after their marriage, she remarried William Lounds Calhoun, her husband's brother. She moved to Palatka with her three sons, Benjamin Putnam, John Caldwell, and William Lounds, when her second husband died.<sup>19</sup>

Another early reminiscence of Palatka was provided by Mary E. Boyd who came to Palatka from Providence, Rhode Island, in 1850 with her widowed mother who had tuberculosis. After spending several days with General Ben Hopkins, the mother " . . . got a house on the corner of Front and Lemon . . . ." later the site of the Kean Building. Mary wrote that " . . . nearly all the buildings at the time were those put up by the army during the Seminole War."<sup>20</sup>

Captain Robert T. Boyd purchased part of the Palatka Tract from the Brush estate in 1847; several of the old government buildings from the war were still on the property. The structures were made from hand-hewn timbers. Boyd erected a new home, one of three in the town that had glass windows and a brick chimney. The house stood on the corner of Lemon and First Streets until

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<sup>19</sup>R. M. Burt, "Biography of Benjamin Alexander Putnam," Palatka Times Herald, January 29, 1937.

<sup>20</sup>Mary E. Boyd Papers, Uncataloged manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

the early 1880's when it was torn down.<sup>21</sup>

In July of 1855, the schooner "Richard Law," Captain George W. Tuthill, was confiscated at Jacksonville by Timber Agent John G. Pilot. The vessel was bound for New York with a cargo of cedar for John Ahsbah; the government confiscated the lot, claiming that the timber had been cut on its property by one Richard F. Boyd and a man named Munroe. The connection between this Richard F. and Mary is not clear; she apparently married Robert T. Boyd shortly after coming to Palatka, for while reminiscing, she indicated, "Mr. Boyd was not very kind to me; he was a tyrant at home, nothing could please him." Boyd held the position of sheriff and tax collector in the early days of the settlement. Mary attempted as late as January, 1916, to obtain redress for the confiscation of the cargo of timber. Her efforts did not meet with success. Richard F. and Munroe were absolved of the charge in a trial some two days after the confiscation. Richard, according to Mary, later lost his mental faculties because of the duress he'd suffered, and died shortly thereafter. The firm of Boyd and Munroe hired slaves from the Sanchez family for sixty dollars per month. The agent arranging this was W. R. Teasdale.<sup>22</sup>

Judge Bronson apparently moved to Palatka some time during 1850; he purchased ten acres of the Palatka tract, known as Sunny Point, in 1851, and constructed a large home which still stands on what is currently referred to as Mulholland Park. When

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.



Bronson died in 1855, the property passed to his wife, Sophronis, who resided in it until the Civil War when she returned north. The house was apparently occupied by both Confederate and Union troops and "bushwhackers," depending on the occupation of Palatka, who, according to Hubbard, ". . . wrote fierce messages to each other on the walls."<sup>23</sup> In 1866, Charlotte J. Henry purchased the house for use as a school for children during the day, and for adults at night. This venture was short-lived however, because she soon married Nathaniel Patton White of Port Huron, Michigan. They spent winters in Palatka until 1895 when White died. Mrs. White lived there until her death in 1904. The property subsequently passed to Mary E. Mulholland and then to Miss Edelmira Rivero. Ultimately the City of Palatka purchased it.

Miss Rivero has the most complete history of the house which has on occasion entertained Thomas Edison and Robert E. Lee.<sup>24</sup>

Judge Bronson was instrumental in securing a charter for the City of Palatka in 1853. The Act of Incorporation creating the town as a political entity passed the House of Representatives on December 31, 1852. The Senate passed it on January 5, 1853, and on January 8, it was approved by the Governor.<sup>25</sup> The first mayor was Judge W.W. Tumblin of Starke. He later served as

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<sup>23</sup>E. Stuart Hubbard, "Memories of Florida, Christmas 1951, 1952, 1953 to 1958," Uncataloged manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

<sup>24</sup>Edelmira Rivero, Notes on the Mulholland Park Property Known as Sunny Point, published by author.

<sup>25</sup>Florida, Laws of Florida, Vol. I, 1845-1855 (Tallahassee: State Comptroller's Office).

county judge for two terms.

A census of Putnam County was conducted in 1850; six hundred and eighty-seven inhabitants occupied the area, four hundred and seventy-three of whom were white. Ninety-five of these over twenty-one years of age were illiterate. There were ten free Negroes and two hundred and four slaves. The principle business of the area was the raising of stock, there being over three thousand cattle, fourteen hundred hogs and one hundred and sixteen draft animals.

A plat of Palatka, entitled "Town of Pilatka, East Florida," has been reproduced and placed in the public library. The date on the original, since destroyed, was April, 1851, and this copy was made by one J. N. B. (James N. Burt?) in December, 1896. The plat listed twenty-nine establishments on thirteen streets. Running east and west, perpendicular to the river were, from the north, Olive, Madison, Williams, Reid--Orange (later connected), Lemon, Oak and Laurel. Paralleling the river in a north-south direction were Water, Front, First, Second and Third. Owners of the lots listed were Lolina Randolph, Sarah A. Wightman, R. R. Reid and Company, S. Gliuski (husband of Mary Boyd's mother), H. R. Blanchard, J. B. Askew, R. R. Reid and Company, K. R. Duke, Cole Hitchcock, R. T. Boyd, Susan Hopkins, C. M. Hitchcock, F. W. Sams, Paul Masters, J. S. Montmollin, J. G. Soule, Soule and Hitchcock, C. H. Dibble, R. Dardis, J. C. Herring, reserved, O. M. Hitchcock, K. R. Duke, R. Dardis, L. H. Rossignol, R. T. Boyd, heirs of J. Phillips, Vandenberg Giles and Hoffman, and the

## Putnam County Courthouse.

This may not have been a complete list of residents; the caption over the column under which these names were listed only referred to the "Table of Lots Sold" and the "Purchasers." Fifty structures of various sizes were included on the map, four of the larger being immediately adjacent to the river, running perpendicular to it just to the north of the foot of Lemon Street between Water Street and the river. Four more large buildings were almost directly across from these. Possibly these were some of the Fort Shannon structures but none of these were on what Mary Boyd referred to as property owned by her family. The courthouse was indicated as being directly at the foot of Lemon on Water Street. Bronson's house was not shown to exist.

Some of the holdings were quite large; Sarah A. Wightman owned most of the block bounded by Water and Front Streets and Main and Madison. L. H. Rossignol owned the whole block between First and Second and Orange and Lemon. R. T. Boyd owned the heirs held title to half the block between Second and Third and Main and Orange. No buildings were indicated west of Second Street (now Fourth Street) or north of Madison; the block where the Bronson house was located was completely void of any symbol.

Unfortunately, only conjecture could be made relative to the early beginnings. It was not likely that the building that existed in 1851 were all part of Fort Shannon. At the same time, evidence did exist, namely the eight larger buildings of which

seven were grouped together and that some of them still stood and were utilized at least in part.

Without this plat, probably the earliest geographic view, much more would have to be left to extrapolation. At any rate, the latter half of the 1840's experienced a spurt of growth in civilian activity, especially when it is considered that military operations dominated the early years of the decade.

The area attracted all types of individuals. An unsigned and undated item in the manuscript collection in the library of the University of Florida referred to a contest between one John Sloan and Jesse Brush over a piece of property on Murphy's Island which lasted as late as 1876. The author apparently didn't hold Brush in high esteem, referring to him as an alcoholic who would " . . . go off on a binge for weeks at a time." His occupation was usually that of a bookkeeper or alligator hunter. Brush came to Palatka in 1852 or 1853.

The growth continued although at a somewhat slower pace. A newspaper, the Whig Banner, began publication in Palatka on June 21, 1846. The editor was George M. Grouard, Jr. It was published Tuesdays.

In his first issue, Grouard noted two hotels in Palatka; the Palatka Hotel was operated by Stanislaus Gliuski and T. Wightman owned the Wightman House. Other businessmen included A. H. Cole, who had a general store, and George Rice, a "General Agent for Claims and Contracts," who received advice from Washington, D. C.

Grouard reported that bridges between Palatka and Tampa

were nearly impassable on July 7, 1846. C. McRae, a store-keeper, was developing navigation on the Oklawaha River. Representative prices were: corn, one dollar per bushel; flour, seven dollars per barrel; and Gumpf's rifles, sixteen dollars each.

He demonstrated his ability to satirize, and protest, in his July 14, 1846, issue.

Notice is hereby given to all interested that from and after this date, the "Alachua Cowboy" formerly David Levy, is hereafter to be respected as David Levy Yulee, a Senator of the United States, for six years at EIGHT DOLLARS per DAY, and as the "Grandson of the Counsellor of the Emperor of Morocco"; and also, that the "Farmer of McCoy's Creek" formerly George Grouard, is to be known henceforth as George Meservey Grouard, Jr., The Editor of the Whig Banner, published at Palatka, East Florida.

Grouard was striking at the opposition to Levy (see below) as representing the interests of the central area of northern Florida.

On July 28, Grouard reported the nomination of E. C. Cabell as candidate for Florida's representative to Congress. The steamer "William Gaston" was plying the St. Johns from Palatka to Savannah, and Joachim Romain had opened a tailor shop. D. A. Beuleson posted a twelve dollar reward for two runaway slaves, Abraham and David. The reward could be collected at the owner's plantation at "Cabage Hammock."

Grouard was still located in Palatka in January, 1847. On the twenty-sixth, he published his thirty-first issue. In this, he reported that the "St. Mathews" was carrying the mail from Palatka, leaving every Tuesday at nine o'clock a.m., for Picolata, Black Creek, Mandarin and Jacksonville. Joshua P. Hawkins was agent for the vessel. He also mentioned that rooms were available at Gluski's House.

Grouard shortly moved his paper to Ocala, and no paper succeeded him.

The New York Times for April 15, 1853, included a letter signed only by "L. N." who reflected on Palatka:

From Picolata we proceeded to Palatka, which is a small village on the river, occupied as an army station during the Florida War. It contains a few old buildings erected for the use of the army, two or three boarding houses, and a few residences. It has recently passed into the hands of an enterprising company (unnamed), who are doing much to improve the place. The most attractive feature about it, is a natural grove, mostly of oak, south of the village. Walking through it for the first time, one can hardly be persuaded that nature alone has laid it out . . . .

This great believer in the ability of man to create failed to shed more light as to the economic activity of those who made up Palatka's population. Whatever the place consisted of, it was small.

There were people who recognized the need for a church. The first to be established in the area was the Baptist Church in Peniel. Reverend S. T. Stanaland and Silas Weeks were instrumental in its organization which culminated on July 19, 1852, when the constitution was adopted. On July 22, 1852, Brother Osteen and his slave Jesse were baptized in a lake by Brother Osteen and his slave Jesse were baptized in a lake by Brother Sellers. The first meeting was held in a "little log house" near the home of Brother Weeks, probably Silas Weeks, who was called as pastor later in 1852. Meetings alternated among the homes of the members.

In 1853, Peter Cannon was elected first clerk and Elijah Tucker the first deacon. M. A. Strickland was pastor in 1854, and his slave Beck was the first Negro woman to join the church. From this time, little was recorded of the membership except for

its being inactive during the Civil War. The first meeting ~~was~~ <sup>After</sup> the war was held on November 24, 1866. Reverend B. W. Becks was called as Pastor the following year.

About this time, George Weathersbee donated two acres to the organization on which to build an edifice. Later more land was purchased. The present name was adopted on May 28, 1871; it was taken from Genesis, Chapter Thirty-two, Verses thirty and thirty-one. Peniel means the "Face of God," named for a camp east of the Jordan River where Jacob saw His visage. The church was moved to its present location during the tenure of William Stone from 1904 to 1906. He was succeeded by Brother H. C. Martin for a two year period during which the cemetery was expanded and a fence was constructed about it.<sup>27</sup>

The establishment of the second church in the Palatka area closely followed that at Peniel; St. Mark's Episcopal Church was organized on December 12, 1853, by Reverend Henry B. Whipple. The first services were held in the courthouse, which this account claimed was on the corner of First and Reid Streets. Judge James Burt supervised the construction of the sanctuary which was designed by Richard Upton.<sup>28</sup> G. M. Davis hewed the rafters by hand. The altar rail was a memorial to Judge Burt by his family and the bell was donated by a Mr. Wanza of New York. A church school in South Carolina donated the communion service which was in the custody of Mrs. M. E. Boyd during the Civil War. During the war the Union Army apparently used the building. The bell, not felt

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<sup>27</sup>Hugh High, "History of Peniel Baptist Church," Palatka, Florida, 1952.

<sup>28</sup>Hubbard, "Memories . . . ."

to be safe in its tower, was removed and placed in an aisle. A story has it that when the Union troops left, they took the Church Bible with them. Some years later it was replaced by an officer who had command of the troops, according to Judge M. I. Coxe. In March of 1866 the Sunday School was organized and money for the expense of installing the iron braces necessary to keep the roof from spreading was raised.

St. Mark's Academy was established by the Reverend C. S. Williams in 1882, who also organized the Sunday School Society known as the "Little Gleaners." This group raised money for the pip organ, the first in Palatka. The building today is an historical landmark, although it has had at least one death sentence; on October 29, 1919, the parishoners decided to raze the old structure and erect a new one of greater capacity.<sup>29</sup>

Just when the Methodist Church was organized is not exactly known, except that sometime during 1852 Reverend J. C. Lay delivered the first sermon in the old courthouse. Later in 1852, services were held in an army barracks on what is now First Street. In 1854, Barnabas McHan was the minister, followed in 1855 by William Davis. In 1860, a building was constructed on the corner of Oak and Fourth Streets. During the war the church disbanded, with the minister going to Orange Springs.

In 1867, A. G. Phillips conducted services in the old church building which served until a frame structure was erected in 1885, utilized until 1923.

The history of the fourth church to be organized in the

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<sup>29</sup> "A History of St. Mark's Church" (no author, no date).



area, the Presbyterian, was initially written by Mrs. Donald MacQueen. It was informally established in 1855 by Judge William A. Forward who invited Reverend Joseph H. Quarterman of Mount Vernon, Georgia, to come to Palatka. The first Sabbath was held in November of 1855, but the church wasn't officially organized until February 16, 1856, with eight members.

One account, from an unidentified source who passed through Orange Mills to Palatka, stated:

Palatka is a . . . thriving little town of five to six hundred permanent inhabitants but has been entirely destitute of the preaching of the word until the present season. But now, through the kindness of those societies which remember the barren places of the earth, the voice of the preacher is heard every Sabbath day.

He then commented on the organization of the Presbyterian Church:

The edifice which serves as a gathering place for this little band is a small . . . powder magazine . . . . As it is no longer needed for a storehouse of the implements of devastation and death, a little labor has transformed it into a meeting place of the followers of The Prince of Life and Peace.<sup>30</sup>

By April, 1856, there were fourteen members; the first services were held in the courthouse. The log structure referred to above stood approximately where the present church stands. The Ladies Aid Society and friends in Liberty County, Georgia, raised money to purchase a lot in 1858.

A permanent structure was donated by Robert Lennox Kennedy in 1881. Kennedy and his wife toured Palatka in the late 1870's. Mrs. Kennedy remarked on leaving the existent structure, "How I wish that someday a fine Church, one that we could be proud of, would stand on this spot."<sup>31</sup> She died shortly, and Mr. Kennedy

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<sup>30</sup>The New York Observer, March 6, 1856.

<sup>31</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 19, 1953.

donated a building that was dedicated on February 27, 1881. It was destroyed in the fire of 1884, but Kennedy once again built the older part of the present structure, patterned after his initial gift. The building was leased to the congregation for two hundred years at the rate of one dollar per year. Kennedy died in 1887 enroute to England by ship.<sup>32</sup>

Reverend Quarterman died shortly after the initial organization, and was succeeded by Reverend E. Q. Frierson. He was replaced by Reverend E. P. Crane on November 20, 1859. Reverend Crane removed to Orange Springs during the Civil War, and the church was inactive. The first pastor after the war was B. C. Robertson, who came in 1871 and served one year, followed by six ministers between 1872 and 1877.

The present pipe organ was built by M. P. Moller of Hagerstown, Maryland. It was installed in January of 1907.

The first Baptist Church in Palatka proper was organized in the home of Reverend Charles Jones in 1870. The first permanent sanctuary, built by William Severs, opened in October on the Hickenlooper lot on River Street. Twelve members were noted in 1870. Later, services were conducted by Doctor S. E. Mays, who rowed from Orange Mills to Palatka. By 1882, there were twenty-six members. A new edifice was constructed in 1920 to accommodate the three hundred and twenty-eight worshipers.<sup>33</sup>

The establishment of these churches indicated growth of the area, although few were so well off as to be able to support

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<sup>32</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, November 3, 1905.

<sup>33</sup>Palatka Daily News, February 16, 1920.

specific quarters for worship in the early days.

Economic growth was evident by the establishment of a stage line between Palatka and Tampa. In July of 1855, Hubbard L. Hart assumed ownership of the existent line between the two towns. Hart came to Palatka from Vermont on July 1, and purchased the business a week later. Stages left both places simultaneously on Mondays and Thursdays, arriving the following Wednesday and Saturday. Hart's offices were in the hotel of Colonel J. O. Deval, and he offered connections with steamship lines at both ends of the route. Travelers could transfer to another stage that ran north and south, from Ocala to Alligator (Lake City).

William Royal published the Southern Sun in Palatka in 1855. On February 3, he made reference to the new barge "Palatka," owned by L. H. Henderson. The vessel was to provide transportation between its namesake and Silver Springs. James Burt served as agent for the Bank of Charleston and "J. O. Devall" as agent for the "New York Line of Briggs and Schooners." The earliest reference to the St. Johns Hotel was noted. It was owned by Lynch and Company. A meeting had recently been held to discuss the building of a plank road between Micanopy and Palatka.

There are references to Palatka's burning in 1855, but when Brevet Major-General Alexander S. Webb stopped in Palatka on the night of December 30, 1855, he made no comment regarding a recent fire. He arrived in the evening aboard the steamer "St. John" from Jacksonville. That he was an discerning individual can be ascertained from his observations. He noted that

the river was full of ducks, and that Palatka was a small town, which he left at seven o'clock on the morning of January 31 on a stage with seven passengers (Hart advertised Concord coaches) including a runaway Negro slave in chains.

Florida and Palatka developed a reputation for being a haven for afflicted individuals during the 1850's. The mild winters attracted increasingly greater numbers of people until the war, which disrupted the trade, but the attraction proved even greater after the conflict. One ante-bellum traveler wrote on February 16, 1858, from Palatka, to his brother, A. B. Smith; ". . . tis as good and perhaps the best place in the state that is open this year . . . ." The food must have agreed with the writer, for he commented on the ". . . good table for Florida . . . ." He continued:

Our amusements here are quite varied and consists of Sailing, Fishing, Rowing, Walking, Riding in Buggy & on horseback, Whist, Enchre, Backgammon & c, etc & hunting.

Our Gardents here are in a high state of cultivation. Green Peas, Tomatos, Peach, Plum and Apple trees, Orange groves loaded with Fruit, but very unfortunately for us, these are Sour varieties, all the Sweet having been disposed of to invalids up & down the River before we got here . . . .

I feel better--gained four to five pounds--Ella and the Boy are enjoying themselves nicely. The Boy is considered quite a little Gentleman by the foks here, but that is owing part to their not being accustomed to See good-looking well behaved children in such a country as this!! (sic)

Yours very truly  
Art Whitney<sup>34</sup>

Mr. Whitney noted the recreational limitations of Palatka, shed light on the agricultural activity of the place, referred

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<sup>34</sup>Uncatalogued manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

to other invalids in the area and to the frontier nature of Palatka in general. He obviously thought highly of his son, who perhaps wasn't afflicted with characteristics that some diseases have on a child, but he only implied that children resided in Palatka, and failed to refer to any specifically.

Things were happening in the interior as well. At Melrose, also referred to as "Shake Rag," enough people congregated to form the Eliam Baptist Church on April 30, 1859, when it was organized at the home of Daniel McLeod. The following July the site for the church was determined to be on the south side of Etoniah Creek at the ford. M. W. Brown was elected deacon in October, and E. B. Timmons served as the first pastor. The building, forty-six by thirty-one feet in area, was dedicated on the second Sunday in August of 1860. During the first meetings, women sat on one side of the center aisle and men on the other. By August of 1876, the church was affluent enough to purchase an organ. The initial building soon outlived its function, for on January 28, 1883, a larger building, constructed by William H. Lee, was dedicated.<sup>35</sup>

John Francis Tenney came to Florida from New York in 1859 to cut cypress in the Six Mile Creek area. He spent a night at Orange Mills, where a large sawmill stood, then continued to Palatka on foot, crossing the river in a dugout. Palatka was only a "hamlet" to use his term, and it was the southernmost settlement in the valley.

Tenney later that year moved to Tocol Creek and harvested

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<sup>35</sup>Uncataloged manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

cypress, using slave labor hired from their masters. His opposition to the "peculiar institution" was apparent by his practice of paying the slaves for the number of trees cut in excess of the "task" which was ten per day.

He included a rather vivid description of the treatment afforded slaves; the Negro was a chattel and was allowed few sentimental ties, even as regarded the choice of a mate. A "hard case" was treated in the following manner; in an outbuilding he would be stripped naked, and his hands and feet would be tied. Then, having been thrown on the ground, his arms were looped over his knees and a stick would be thrust over the wrist and under the back of the knee, rendering the individual a "perfectly helpless ball of humanity." The whipping was done by an old slave referred to as the "driver," a sort of foreman, who wielded a device consisting of a short stick to which was affixed a strap of leather an inch and a half wide. Twenty lashes was the usual punishment, and the man would be rolled over constantly so as to expose the more "tender spots."<sup>36</sup>

Tenney contended that slaves were not bought and sold frequently at the slave "market" in St. Augustine. More often they were hired out, which was probably the case because of the high cost of a slave, one thousand dollars for a prime worker. Tenney maintained that ". . . if the subject (slavery) could have been treated in a proper spirit, slavery could have been abolished in this country without the terrible war of secession."<sup>37</sup> He also

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<sup>36</sup>John Francis Tenney, Slavery, Secession and Success (San Antonio: Southern Literary Institute, 1934) p. 13.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

stated, "Every industry was made subservient to slave labor, which retarded the advance of the people."<sup>38</sup>

The chronicler also felt that had fair elections been held, Florida would not have seceded from the Union. The elections were reputedly in the hands of secessionists who manipulated them to the cause. Tenney related a personal experience in regard to this; he told how he and five voters were taken to the polls by the "secesh," where, for the lack of printed ballots, one wrote his choice on a slip of paper. Illiterate, four of Tenney's acquaintances asked him to write "the Union" on their ballots. The secessionists recognized the handwriting and came to Tenney with drawn pistols.<sup>39</sup>

Before the winter of 1861-62, it was obvious to Tenney that to remain in the South could be detrimental to his existence, and he left on what he called the "last steamer." He returned to New Hampshire, but couldn't keep the valley out of his mind. He once again set out for Florida in the winter of 1865-6.

Steamboats appeared in greater numbers on the river during the fifties; most of their cargoes consisted of bringing in the stuff of life and taking out lumber, especially cedar and cypress. The river continued to be the most efficient and economical means of transportation available to the valley residents.

Some of the vessels were very fast; the "Magnolia," built in New York in 1850, averaged seventeen and four tenths miles per hour in a run from Savannah to Jacksonville, the round trip

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

taking only forty-three running hours in June of 1851. It was a rather large craft, displacing two hundred and sixty tons with a length of one hundred and forty feet and a beam of twenty-four feet and six inches.<sup>40</sup>

It was not certain that Captain Jacob Brock's "Darlington" replaced the "Sarah Spaulding" on the river; little was heard of the latter after the winter of 1854 when Brock introduced commercial navigation to Enterprise. Brock also owned a vessel called the "Welaka."<sup>41</sup>

The first iron-hulled vessel to ply the St. Johns was the "St. Mary's," built in Wilmington, Delaware in 1857. The "St. Mary's" was a side-wheeler one hundred and fifty-nine feet in length and twenty-six in width. It displaced three hundred and thirty-seven tons. Oddly enough, iron-hulled vessels never did really play an important role on the river until after the turn of the century. Several reasons could account for this; the initial cost, availability of cheap lumber and labor, and the lighter characteristics of the wooden-hulled vessel, which, even if sunk, was usually shortly raised and re-fitted.

Savannah and Charleston were the two Atlantic ports with which the valley did most of its business. After 1860, the "Carolina," "Cecile," "Gordon," and the "William Seabrooke" made the St. Johns to Charleston run, while on the Savannah route were the "Augusta," "Evergalde," "St. Johns," and "St. Mary's." In the Palatka vicinity, the "Darlington" was busy huffing its way

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<sup>40</sup>Mueller, p. 253.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 256.



back and forth to Enterprise. It had competition beginning in April of 1861, when "Barroso" also engaged in trafficking between the two places. "Barroso" was built in Astoria, New York, in 1852 and displaced one hundred and fifty-two tons.

The "Everglade" was used for supporting the Confederacy during the Civil War; the name was changed to "Savannah," and later, having been conscripted by the Confederate Navy, it was known as the C. S. S. Oconee. While bearing the latter name it was captured by the Union Navy in August, 1863.

The "Carolina," later "Kate," was wrecked on the Cape Fear River in 1862 after successfully running the Union blockade some forty times.

"Gordon" was renamed "Theodora." It carried Mason and Slidell, the Confederate emissaries to Britain, on the first leg of their journey to the West Indies for a \$10,000.00 fee in October, 1861. It made seventeen blockade runs before being captured.

The "Darlington" was captured in an attempt to break the Union Navy's stranglehold at Fernandina in March, 1862. The Federal forces expropriated it for the duration of the conflict, but it was reclaimed by its owner, Jacob Brock, after the war, and returned to the run from Palatka upriver to Enterprise.

The "St. Johns" was captured in April, 1863, and was renamed "Helen Getty" in December of that same year.<sup>42</sup>

In February, 1864, the "St. Mary's", then known as the "Nick King," was sunk by the Federals near Jacksonville. They

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 258.

raised the vessel, and refitted it, changing the name to the U. S. S. Genessee. After the war it reverted to the former owner and was re-named "Nick King" again in 1868. Robert E. Lee toured part of the river on this vessel.

The heyday of steamboating was yet to come to the St. Johns however. Not until after the Reconstruction era was the river to serve as the main artery of north central Florida.

## CHAPTER XI. THE CIVIL WAR ERA

Mr. Tenney's observation that industry in the area was dependent on slave labor was supported by the Census of 1860 which indicated that more than half of the population in "Pilatka" was Negro. An analysis of the census indicated that of a total of six hundred and thirteen inhabitants, one hundred and forty-seven were white males. Another one hundred sixteen were white females, for a total white population of two hundred and sixty-three.

There were thirty-one free Negroes indicated, nineteen of whom were female. The slave population numbered one hundred and seventy males and one hundred and forty-nine females for a total of three hundred and nineteen slaves. A grand total of three hundred and fifty Negroes lived within the limits of Palatka.

The county figures revealed that Palatka accounted for something less than one-fourth of the people in Putnam County. A total of two thousand seven hundred and twelve resided in the county. There were more whites in the outlying area than Negroes. Seven hundred and sixty-seven males and six hundred four females composed the white population. The Negroes numbered three hundred and seventy-three males and three hundred fifty-five females. Ninety-eight of the total number of Negroes in the town and the county were Mulattoes, fifty-two of these being females. There

was no breakdown on the number of Mulattoes in Palatka. All of the thirty-one free Negroes lived in town however.

In comparing these figures with the 1850 census, it was noted that Putnam County's population nearly quadrupled in the decade before 1860.<sup>1</sup> The rate of growth declined from 1860 to 1870 however; by 1870 a total county population of three thousand eight hundred and twenty-one was enumerated.<sup>2</sup> The number of slaves did not change from 1850 to 1860. Two hundred and four slaves were indicated in each census. In addition to these, there were ten free Negroes.<sup>3</sup>

As indicated above, the major economic activity centered on harvesting the forest products of the vicinity. There was some agricultural enterprise based on the cultivation of the orange, but most farming was oriented towards the raising of livestock, cattle and hogs primarily, and subsistence agricultural products for local consumption. The importance of cotton was significant only in that it was funneled from the interior through Palatka for trans-shipment to Charleston or Savannah.

The agricultural potential of Florida later capitalized on the needs of the Confederacy for foodstuffs and the state was one of the chief sources of subsistence for the South during the war, especially livestock and salt. The agricultural efforts of the states to the north of Florida continued to be devoted to

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<sup>1</sup>U.S., Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States: 1860, Population (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1864) p. 54ff.

<sup>2</sup>U.S., Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States: Population (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1872) p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

the production of cotton, until stockpiles reached the point where the Confederate Government had to nearly abolish its cultivation.

Florida contributed what it could to the manpower demands of Richmond, but it was the least populated state in the South with a total number of 140,425 persons, 77,748 of whom were white.

The Florida Secession Convention assembled in Tallahassee on January 3, 1861. After seven days debate, the Secession Ordinance was adopted at 12:22 p.m. on January 10 by a vote of sixty-two to seven. James O. Devall, the Putnam County delegate voted in favor of the proposal.<sup>4</sup> Devall, a merchant, owned twenty-five slaves and was worth a total of \$35,000.00.<sup>5</sup>

Fort Marion (the Castillo de San Marcos) was seized even before the convention reached its decision. On January 7, 1861, Sergeant Henry Douglas of the Ordnance Department wrote Colonel H. K. Craig, the Chief of Ordnance, that he'd surrendered the keys under protest to an aide-de-camp of the Governor of Florida. Madison Starke Perry, who had a letter from the governor authorizing the seizure. Douglas went on to say, "One thing is certain, with the exception of the guns composing the armament of the water battery, the property seized is of no great value."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>J. J. Dickison, Military History of Florida (Atlanta: Confederate Publishing Company, 1899) p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Ralph A. Wooten, "The Florida Secession Convention, January 3, 1861, Tallahassee," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXVI No. 4 (April, 1958).

<sup>6</sup>U.S., The War of the Rebellion; A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series One, Vol. I (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1880) p. 333.

In a South starving for armament, Douglas' latter words were somewhat understated. The Federal Army inventory of ordnance in Fort Marion on January 7, 1861 included:

Six field batteries; four were six pounders and two were twelve pound howitzers.  
 Twenty sea-coast and garrison cannon; four eight inch howitzers and sixteen thirty-two pound cannon.  
 Six old iron six-pound cannon.  
 Thirty-one guns of foreign make and various calibre.  
 Two thousand and twenty-one projectiles.  
 Three hundred and thirty rounds of fixed ammunition.  
 Eight hundred and seventy-three priming tubes.  
 Nine hundred and thirty-one pounds of powder.  
 One hundred and ten muskets.  
 One hundred and three rifles.  
 One hundred and eighteen Hall's carbines.  
 Ninety-eight pistols.  
 14,472 cartridges for small arms.  
 15,000 percussion caps.<sup>7</sup>

The Provisional Congress of the Confederacy assembled on February 4, 1861, and remained in session for a year, disbanding on February 17, 1862. Florida's delegates were: J. Patten Anderson, who resigned on May 2, 1861; James Bowens; Jackson Morton, admitted February 6, 1861; George T. Ward, admitted May 2, succeeding Anderson, and resigned February 5, 1862; and John P. Sanderson, who succeeded Ward.<sup>8</sup>

The First Confederate Congress was seated on February 18, 1862, and remained in session until February 17, 1864. Augustus E. Maxwell and James M. Baker were Florida's senators while the representatives were: James B. Dawkins, who resigned December 2, 1862; Robert B. Hilton; and John M. Martin, admitted March 25, 1863.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 350.

<sup>8</sup>U.S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series Four, Vol. III, p. 1185.

The Second Confederate Congress convened on May 2, 1864. It adjourned March 18, 1865. Senators from Florida were again Maxwell and Baker, and the representatives were Robert Hilton and S. St. George Rogers, who was admitted on May 3, 1864.<sup>9</sup>

The first occasion on which Palatka became involved in the war was May 1, 1861, when a company of men was organized by John W. Starke. Starke assumed the rank of captain; second in command was C. Seton Fleming with the rank of first lieutenant. The senior second lieutenant was Alexander Moseley. The company encamped at Fort Number Ten, on the west bank of the river, six miles below Palatka where Starke had his plantation near Fish Creek in the vicinity of Russell's Point.

Among the enlisted men was Doctor E. Hawes, later a State Senator, who served as physician. From Number Ten, the company removed to St. Augustine and then in July of 1861, to Jacksonville where it was referred to as "Starke's Company of Putnam County." While at Jacksonville the company was merged into the Second Florida Infantry with other county units. On July 13, 1861, the regiment was mustered into the Army of the Confederate States of America. After stopping at Richmond, the Second Florida arrived at Yorktown in September, 1861.<sup>10</sup>

In the spring of 1862, the regiment was "blooded" at Yorktown against McClellan. During the conflict, Fleming suffered a wound in the hip. He was captured on May 6 when Federal

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 1187ff.

<sup>10</sup>Francis P. Fleming, Memoir of Captain C. Seton Fleming of the Second Florida Infantry, C. S. A. (Jacksonville, Florida: Times Union Publishing House, 1884) p. 25ff.

forces entered Williamsburg and then was exchanged on August 5, 1862.<sup>11</sup>

The Second Florida sustained rather heavy losses in the Battle of Seven Pines on June 3, 1862. Thirty-seven men were killed and one hundred fifty-two were wounded. Nine were listed as missing.<sup>12</sup> After the battles at Gaines' Hill and Frazier's Farm, the regiment fought at the battle of the Second Manassas. This marked the end of the regiment as an integral unit; it was reorganized with the Twelfth Virginia and the Fourteenth Alabama to form Pryor's Brigade.<sup>13</sup> In September, the brigade was successful in taking Harper's Ferry. After the Sharpsburg Battle, the brigade was once again reorganized, this time into the Florida Brigade under General Edward A. Perry, commanding the Second, Fifth and Eighth Regiments as part of the Army of Northern Virginia. The next battle in which remnants of the company took part was Gettysburg, where losses were very heavy. The Second re-enlisted on July 13, 1864, for the duration and subsequently fought at <sup>the</sup> Wilderness where once again heavy losses were sustained. Fleming, now a captain, was wounded twice, once in the abdomen and also in the chest. The abdominal wound was little more than a bruise.<sup>14</sup> He was killed at the skirmish at Garries Farm on June 3, 1864.<sup>15</sup> The history of what remained of

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 94.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 103.



the company since that battle is vague.

The St. Johns River was an even more important artery for transportation during the war. There was little activity after 1862 due to Federal control, instigated by its potential usefulness recognized during 1861. Early in the war, steamboats ran out of the St. Johns in an attempt to break the Federal blockade. Sailing vessels were also active during the early years of the war. The yacht "America" was one of these.

The "America" had been built at a cost of \$30,000.00 in 1851, by a New York Yacht Club syndicate to participate in the race for the Royal Yacht Squadron's One Hundred Guinea Cup in England.<sup>16</sup> The vessel came home with the prize, later and more popularly known as the America Cup. The boat was subsequently sold to Viscount Templeton and was registered as the "Camilla" in 1857. Henry S. Potcher purchased and rebuilt the craft in 1858. It changed hands once again on July 30, 1860, when Henry E. Decie purchased it. Lord Decie was a Confederate sympathizer and the "Camilla" was used as a blockade runner out of Savannah in 1861.

In late 1861, Lord Decie sold the "Camilla" to the Confederacy which changed its name to "Memphis." Supposedly the vessel was to carry Mason and Slidell to Havana, but didn't. However, in the last months of the year it was scuttled in Haw Creek to avoid capture when the Union forces trapped it in the river.

In early 1862, Lieutenant T. H. Stevens, commanding the

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<sup>16</sup>Time, September 23, 1966.

gunboat U. S. S. Ottawa, spotted the "Memphis" while scouting the upper reaches of the river. "After a week's hard labor," he raised the vessel on March 28, 1862, noting the sad condition it was in; the masts and spars were gone as was all the rigging.<sup>17</sup>

Admiral Samuel F. Du Pont, Commander of the Southern Blockading Squadron, wrote Stevens a letter of commendation on April 5, 1862, for his efforts in recovering the "America," and directed him to deliver the vessel to Port Royal where it would be refitted and sent north.<sup>18</sup> The U. S. S. Ottawa towed the "America" to that port in the company of the "Ellen."<sup>19</sup> A fourth vessel joined them later, for on April 9, 1862, Stevens sent a message to Captain A. C. Crocker of the "Cosmopolitan" instructing him to keep his vessel in line so that the U. S. S. Ottawa could better provide protection.<sup>20</sup>

Shortly after raising the "America," Stevens wrote that he was going to raise the steamer "St. Mary's," also scuttled in Haw Creek.

The "America" was later commissioned as a dispatch boat, and captured at least one blockade-running Confederate vessel before being sent to Newport, Rhode Island on May 5, 1863, to be used in training midshipmen at the Naval Academy which had relocated there during the war. In 1873 it was sold to Benjamin F.

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<sup>17</sup>U.S., Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, Series One, Vol. XII, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1901) p. 638ff.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 716.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 748.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 724.

Butler who years later sold the craft to the Eastern Yacht Club of Marblehead, Massachusetts. On October 1, 1921, the club presented it as a gift to the Navy which used it as a floating museum at Annapolis until it was broken up in 1945.<sup>21</sup> & 22

Stevens was one of the first Union Navy men on the river in the Palatka area, and he became familiar with the valley quite readily. On March 27, 1862, he warned one Mr. De Costa of Orange Mills that he had better surrender, or Stevens would destroy the settlement. Orange Mills was a center of opposition in the area for on May 21, Lieutenant J. W. Nicholson, commanding the U. S. S. Isaac Smith, wrote Du Pont that there were about twenty-five rebel troops at that place, and another hundred in the vicinity of Black Horse Landing near the mouth of the Oklawaha.<sup>23</sup> The latter force rather effectively controlled the Oklawaha River mouth, for during the preceding month, on the twenty-first, Lieutenant Ammens reported to Du Pont that he couldn't reach the Oklawaha because of the narrow and winding characteristics of the channel, and because of constant fire by riflemen.<sup>24</sup> Du Pont instructed Nicholson on May 23, 1862, not to fire on Orange Mills unless he was fired upon. "I do not wish that there should

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<sup>21</sup>U.S., Naval History Division, Civil War Naval Chronology: 1861-1865, Part XI; Special Studies and Cumulative Index (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1966) p. 269.

<sup>22</sup>The "America" is to live again. President Rudolph Schaefer of the Schaefer Brewing Company has provided \$400,000.00 for construction of a replica of the hundred and three foot long vessel. Time, September 23, 1966.

<sup>23</sup>U.S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XII, 1901, p. 806.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 805.

be any destruction of property."<sup>25</sup>

This order refuted later charges that a war of attrition was being waged by Union forces in the upper valley area. It was explicitly stated that property was not to be destroyed unless in retaliation.

Perhaps Du Pont's order was based in part on Lieutenant Stevens' report of April 3, 1862. He wrote that the residents of the valley from Jacksonville to Palatka " . . . are for the most part quite peaceable and apparently well disposed toward their old Flag . . . ." <sup>26</sup> Here was a substantiation of Tenney's observation as well, indicating that the elections were rigged so as to appease the revolutionaries who were not in the majority.

Naval activity was quite extensive throughout 1862. Among other military vessels patrolling the St. Johns during that year were the gunboats U. S. S. E. B. Hale, U. S. S. Isaac Smith, U. S. S. Norwich, U. S. S. Ottawa, U. S. S. Patroon, U. S. S. Paul Jones, U. S. S. Pembina, U. S. S. Seneca, U. S. S. Unadilla and the U. S. S. Water Witch. Transports and other unclassified vessels included the "Ben da Ford," "Boston," "Cimarron," "Cosmopolitan," "Darlington," "Ellen," "Garibaldi," "Massachusetts," "Uncas" and "Wabash."

During 1863 and 1864 only four gunboats were noted; these were the U. S. S. E. B. Hale, U. S. S. Mungoe, U. S. S. Ottawa, and U. S. S. Vixen. The steam sloop U. S. S. Pawnee also operated on the river. Other vessels included the "Charles Houghton,"

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 807.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 698.

"Caponicus," "Delaware," "Fulton," "Harriet Weed," "Houghton," "Island City," "Mahaska," "Mary Benton," and the "Norwich."

The first large naval force operated on the river in October, 1862. During that month, seven gunboats under Captain Charles Steedman, aboard the U. S. S. Paul Jones, were stationed at Mayport. Other vessels and their commanding officers were: U. S. S. Cimarron, Captain Woodhull; U. S. S. Hale, Lieutenant-Commander Suell; U. S. S. Isaac Smith, Lieutenant J. W. A. Nicholson; U. S. S. Patroon, Lieutenant-Commander Uran; U. S. S. Uncas, Lieutenant-Commander Crane; and U. S. S. Water Witch, Lieutenant-Commander Pendergrast.<sup>27</sup>

The Navy was the most active Federal force in the valley during early 1862 and their achievements caused a cold chill to settle among the residents. General Order Number One Hundred and Nine was issued by President Lincoln on July 22, 1862. It instructed the military commanders of Union forces operating in the Southern States to " . . . seize and use any property, real or personal, which may be necessary or convenient for their several commands as supplies, or for other military purposes . . . ."<sup>28</sup> The order also directed Union forces to employ as many Negroes as they were able.

By October, the Navy was doing just that. The U. S. S. E. B. Hale, Acting Master Suell, arrived at Palatka on the sixth. There the Hale joined the U. S. S. Paul Jones, Lieutenant-Commander E. P. Williams, and the army transport "Darlington." The

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<sup>27</sup>U.S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XIV, 1885, p. 129.

<sup>28</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series Three, Vol. II, 1899, p. 397.

next day the little fleet went upriver to Welaka, destroying all the boats and scows it could find. They continued upriver to Hawkinsville, one hundred and sixty-eight miles above Jacksonville, and captured the Confederate steamer "Governor Milton." When all returned to Jacksonville, the Hale had in company, ". . . two large scows; several boats and thirty-nine contraband; men, women, and children."<sup>29</sup>

After this flotilla headed upriver, the U. S. S. Cimarron, Commander Maxwell Woodhull, arrived at Palatka about October 7, 1862. As the vessel neared the town, which initially appeared to be deserted, two people came into sight. These were, according to Captain Woodhull's report, Moseley (probably ex-Governor William O. Moseley) and a man named Blood. Blood was a northerner and apparently did the talking, for the report stated that Moseley and the people in the area were frightened; nearly everyone fled into the "bush" in the interior so as to avoid being captured and either executed or imprisoned in the north as current rumors had it. Blood "feared for his life" by staying at Palatka, and he requested that he be allowed to leave with the Federal force. He and his family boarded the U. S. S. Hale, but Moseley and Blood were sent back to the shore as forty to fifty armed men on horses appeared behind Blood's house. The U. S. S. Cimarron withdrew and fired several shells over the town, later claiming that three or four of the rebel force were killed or wounded. The rest of the horsemen fled and Blood was again taken

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<sup>29</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XIII, p. 364.

aboard. Thirty Negroes, who were also afraid to stay alone, requested to be taken out of Palatka, which accounted for some of the refugees the U. S. S. Hale had on board when it returned to Jacksonville.<sup>30</sup>

Woodhull continued his report saying that a group of women " . . . headed by a Mrs. Boyd . . . ." told the Federals that most of the men were in the swamps and that only a few disorganized calvary were in the neighborhood. "She begged, as they were unable to help themselves or prevent the violence of the men, not to shell the town." Woodhull told her to get the troops out of town in two hours or he would commence firing on the settlement. Mrs. Boyd complied with this order and the "partisans" left.<sup>31</sup>

This was the incident referred to by Mrs. Boyd when she (???) wrote an undated account of her experience with a Federal force during the war.<sup>32</sup> The account read:

Mrs. Houghton who lived on the Hights had been in to see me the day before and I had promised to give her some sugar to sweeten pap for her baby, and the judge (Moseley?) came down for it, and asked me to put it up whil he went to the river. I got it ready as soon as I could and by that time he came running back in a very excited manner shouting 'get out of the town' 'the Gunboat is here and they are going to burn the town.' He came in and got the sugar and ran with all his might home, shouting as he went save yourselves--

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<sup>30</sup>U. S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XIII, p. 368.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 369.

<sup>32</sup>In the manuscript collection at the library of the University of Florida is an irregularly shaped and torn brown wrapping paper on which is written in pencil and not completely intact, the transcription.

'they are going to burn the town' before this we were told that Lieut. Reddick was here and had sworn to kill a man off the gunboat and he secreted himself in the weeds in front of the place where the Presbyterian church now stands, for that purpose. One of the few families who still remained in town was that of Mr. Lynch who owned the St. Johns Hotel diagonally across the street from our home. Some one had asked Reddick not to fire on the gunboat which was anchored in the river as they would surely retaliate if he did. He answered that he didn't care if they did he had neither friends or property here, Mrs. Lynch and myself went out to find Reddick but could not. we however saw his valet who had his horse and we told him there were sick people and women and children here that could not be removed and we had come to beg him not to fire on the gunboat as there would certainly be lives lost as well as property needlessly destroyed. His servant soon brought no word that Lieut. Reddick said he would go at once to Orange Springs and would not fire on the gunboat. Still the cannon kept booming over our heads and women and children were hurrying to escape the burning town as everyone thought I asked whether any on had been to beg them not to burn the town and they told me no man would dare to go to them for he would be taken prisoner --So I said if there is no man that dares to go I will see what a woman can do. We wer told that Reddick's threat had been told them and the order to burn the town was in consequence of it--I went across the street and asked Mrs. Lynch if she would go with me to explain matters and to ask that the town might not be burned--She went about a block with me and then turned back and I went on the wharf at the foot of Lemon St and waved my handkerchief hoping someone would come that I could speak to. As I stood there eight guns were fired over my head I saw small boats leave the gunboat and go to a sawmill that stood at the foot of Washington St. where the ways are now and as I turned to go there exgovernor Moseley asked what I was trying to do and I told him I was hoping to prevent their burning the town. He said 'go on and may God help you.' A Sargeant seemed to have charge of the moving and I asked him if it was true that they were going to burn the town. He said yes they were liable to be fired on at any moment and that if a gun was fired by accident or otherwise the fuss would be started I told him they were not to be fired on and he did not believe me, said he would not believe a damned rebel on his deathbed I then told him that I was born in Rhode Island and asked him if he would not believe me and assured him that I would not tell him a falsehood or any thing I did not know was the truth. Then he looked at me for the first time and said 'Yes I will believe you' Then I told him that Lieut. Reddick had been prevailed upon to leave town and that he had no company under command and I told him of the helpless condition of the sick that were here and also that of the women and children that there were but two mules and carts in the town and they belonged to my husband and we could not do much to



help others to get to a place of safety if they should burn the houses where they lived--The young soldier seemed touched but said I can only obey orders I have no authority I then asked him how I could see the officers in command and he told me I could go on board the gunboat and speak to them if I wished to. I told him I could not to that, and asked him to tell the officer in command that a lady wished to speak to him and soon a boatload sic

This ended the manuscript written by Mrs. Boyd. The rest of the story came from an article relating to this incident published in the Palatka News on April 27, 1917.

The officer in command and several came ashore to speak with her, and accepted her explanation of affairs very willingly and saying that it is not our wish to needlessly destroy life or property, but anything that becomes an obstacle to us, in the use of this river will be put out of our way. Then turning to exGovernor Moseley, he said, 'Why did you tell me there were no Confederate soldiers in town when you visited the gunboat this morning? Did you hope to get us in ambush? Was that your object? When you were telling us there were no soldiers here, our watch saw them with the glass, and our guns were turned on them.'

The old gent was thunderstruck by this unexpected tirade, but turning to Mrs. Boyd he said, 'For God's sake explain.', and she did as well as she could. She told them the Governor came downtown very seldom from his residence about one-half mile from the center of town where he lived very quietly, and that he had not likely heard of the soldiers who had crossed the river in the night before. 'I feel sure Governor Moseley did not intend to deceive you.' The officer then said to him 'I accept Mrs. Boyd's explanation and I want to tell you that it has saved you from being taken a prisoner.' Then turning to Mrs. Boyd, he said, 'You have done well; should you live a hundred years you can look back on this as the best days work you have ever done. You have saved lives and property and also saved an old man from being taken a prisoner of war.'

Mrs. Boyd wrote to the Navy Department in 1897 requesting information on the U. S. S. "Dale" (Hale), a gunboat in Palatka about July 1, 1862, which "carried off" a northern family named Blood. The Navy answered on March 13, 1897, listing four men who were stationed aboard the vessel and sent the addresses the Navy had. One, William Henderson of Austerlitz, New York,

responded to Mrs. Boyd's request of him, but he wasn't on the Hale when it was in Florida.<sup>33</sup>

Captain Woodhull commented on Palatka in his report: "The people are living in a most destitute condition. The corn crop is only about an average one." It is clear that with only a few exceptions, the six hundred or more people of Palatka no longer resided there. Many went to Orange Springs, although places as near as Florahome were considered relatively safe. No church, Baptist, Catholic or Methodist, had a minister in July, 1862. They'd all either fled to the interior, or joined the military.<sup>34</sup> Up to this time no large Union land forces had penetrated this part of the valley. Woodhull also mentioned that a sugar mill was operative at "Orange Point"; this was one of two between Palatka and Mayport, the other being at the latter place. Perhaps Woodhull identified the owner of the mill, when immediately after the reference to Orange Point (Mills) he mentioned a Doctor Mays, a "most malignant rebel."<sup>35</sup>

Woodhull took the U. S. S. Cimarron upriver to Palatka again in December, commenting on the eleventh that there was a " . . . real Union feeling existing and a decided wish for the termination of the war."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Mary Boyd papers.

<sup>34</sup>John E. Johns, Florida During the Civil War (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1963) p. 184.

<sup>35</sup>U. S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XIII, p. 369.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 477.

All was not well for the valley residents. They were involved in something that was perhaps too frightening for them to really face. Their precarious and vulnerable position only added to this fear, and the vast majority fled inland, away from the river.

The Federals had their difficulties as well. A report concerning a gunboat was written in late 1862; the gunboat U. S. S. Patroon had a crew so " . . . insubordinate and demoralized . . . as to render her totally inefficient."<sup>37</sup>

The St. Johns Rangers, a mounted troop, were organized in St. Augustine in April of 1862 with an initial complement of two officers and eighty-five men. They were merged into the Second Regiment of Cavalry in December, 1862,<sup>38</sup> after increasing their strength to one hundred men and officers in June.<sup>39</sup> Most of the activity of this force occurred east of the valley.

A more important figure as regards Confederate operations in the valley was John Jackson Dickison. Born in Virginia (1816?), he moved to South Carolina and later to Florida in 1856 when he settled on a tract of land facing Orange Lake in Marion County. He did quite well for himself, for the 1860 census showed that he was worth \$26,000.00.

The Marion Light Artillery Company was organized in October, 1861; Captain John M. Martin was the commanding officer and

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 380.

<sup>38</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XIV, 1885, p. 488.

<sup>39</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. LIII, 1898, p. 249.

J. J. Dickison was a lieutenant. Dickison resigned in May, 1862, however, to form his own company of calvary. At first he was unsuccessful, but finally on July 2, General Joseph Finegan commissioned his group as the company of the Second Florida Calvary, bringing it up to regimental strength.

Men from all over northeast Florida (Alachua, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Hillsborough, Madison, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Sumter, and Volusia counties) joined Dickison. This geographical diversification accounted for his difficulties in getting it organized. They were mustered in at Flotard's Pond in Marion County in August as Company "H." Dickison was elected captain, and there were twelve other officers and sixty-three privates.

Federal forces referred to Dickison as "Dixie," or "Gray Fox" or "War Eagle" for his exploits in the St. Johns Valley which, being Dickison's chief area of operations, was dubbed "Dixie's Land."<sup>40</sup>

The unit was initially ordered to Jacksonville, but soon pulled back to the Palatka area where the force fought on a guerilla basis, living off the land so to speak. They relied heavily upon sporadic raids especially to replenish their military stores.

One of Dickison's first orders was to remove all Negroes

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<sup>40</sup>Mary E. Dickison, Dickison and His Men; Reminiscences of the War in Florida (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962) p. xv.

not in the company of their owners and all free Negroes to the interior, placing them out of reach of the Federal naval forays on the St. Johns. These raids must have been fairly successful in order to justify the Confederate directive which was dated October 30, 1862, after the U. S. S. Hale and the U. S. S. Cimarron first visited Palatka.<sup>41</sup>

Special Order Number 1543 dated December 31, 1862, ordered Dickison to Palatka, then across the river to St. Augustine where he was to harrass Federal troops encamped in the area.<sup>42</sup>

The tempo of battle increased somewhat during early 1863 as far as the Palatka vicinity was concerned. Brigadier-General Joseph Finegan, C. S. A., informed Brigadier-General Thomas Jordan, Commander of the South, on March 20, that the Union Navy seemed about to embark on a foray up the river, this time accompanied by soldiers. Their purpose was to raid the plantations. He mentioned also that he had a company of troops at Palatka, referring to Dickison.<sup>43</sup> Dickison's pickets reported the approach of a vessel headed upstream on March 26. He marched his men into town, leaving the horses at his camp on the hill, Camp Leo. The company of fifty men was deployed thusly: thirty men under Lieutenant W. H. McCardell were positioned some fifty yards from the river. Ten men led by Lieutenant W. J. McEaddy covered one of the main streets. The remaining ten accompanied Dickison as he took up a position about one hundred

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<sup>41</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . ., Series One, Vol. XIV, p. 661.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 739.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 838.

yards from Teasdale and Reid's upper wharf.

The transport approached the east bank and anchored offshore, just opposite to Mr. Baza's about four o'clock in the afternoon. Although Dickison observed that small craft plied between the vessel and the east bank for most of the night, he was not disturbed across the river. Shortly after sunrise however, the Union troops came ashore at Teasdale and Reid's wharf.

In Dickison's words:

Having nothing to cover my men from their view but a plank fence and an intrenchment thrown up during the night, I ordered all to lie close and keep concealed, at the same time occupying a position myself so as to watch every movement of the enemy.<sup>441</sup>

The first man ashore was Bill Roe, an engineer from the steamer "St. Mary's" to reconnoitre the area. When he returned to the steamer, the landing of the troops commenced. Dickison ordered his men to fire when there were thirty or forty men on the dock. He observed that both the upper and lower decks of the vessel were crowded with troops " . . . as thick as they could stand." When the firing commenced they " . . . immediately retreated to their boat in great confusion . . . dragging their dead and wounded." As the vessel backed away from the pier, the Federals returned Dickison's fire, using light, heavy and small arms, throwing shell, grape and canister. The vessel retreated to the east bank and then the order was given to march back overland to Orange Mills from whence they had come the preceding night. Some seventy to eighty Negro troops commanded by white officers made up this accompanying force. Dickison stated that

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<sup>441</sup>Ibid., p. 238.

the transport had three or four light artillery pieces.

Dickison estimated the force to number seven to eight hundred men ". . . under the command of the notorious Montgomery . . . . My candid opinion is that we must have killed and wounded not less than twenty to thirty. Among the wounded, we are informed, was the illustrious colonel himself." Continuing, "Among the trophies on the wharf was a considerable quantity of blood in several places and also many fragments of bone, pronounced by the surgeon of the post here to be pieces of cranium." It was assumed that the transport was the "Ben de Ford," capable of carrying one thousand troops, the largest to come up the river.

Dickison then described subsequent events:

Had he advanced, as we expected, we should no doubt have had a close and desperate engagement; but the vandals, satisfied with their warm reception, thought best to retire as quick as possible. They proceeded down to Orange Mill, and took on board their land forces, several negroes, horses and plunder, of which they had robbed the good citizens on that side of the river. They committed great depredations in their raid from Orange Mill up to Mr. Sanchez', taking everything they could lay their hands upon--negroes, horses, and provision of all kinds. They were guilty even of breaking open the trunks of helpless women, stealing and destroying the contents.

Excuse my lengthy report, as I deem it my duty to give you all the details and real acts of such demons. I had one man slightly wounded in the thigh by a fragment of shell.

J. J. Dickison  
 Capt. Commanding Company H  
 (2<sup>d</sup> Florida Calvary)  
 end post.

More light was shed on the engagement by the deposition of Thomas T. Russell in a letter to General Finegan on April 2, 1863.

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 239.



Russell was a resident of the east bank near Palatka. He verified Dickison's story, but filling in some details Dickison couldn't have known at the time of his writing, which he did on the day of the skirmish.

Russell referred to two vessels. The first, a side-wheel steamer, passed his place on March 23, and went up to Palatka where it fired four shots over the town and then returned to Orange Mills. It remained there until Tuesday afternoon and then continued down the river. Before the vessel left however, a "propellor" arrived at Orange Mills in the morning. A large force of Negro troops disembarked at the residence of Mr. C. Du Pont. They then marched overland and subsequently met the vessel at Palatka two days later. On the overland march, they visited the plantation of Colonel Dancy where they "captured" two Negroes, one of whom shortly escaped. They "cooked and ate here, and carried off all the poultry" and then ransacked a house the colonel had on the river. From Dancy's, the force proceeded to the plantation of Major Bolling, destroying everything they could, but they "caught" no Negroes because these had been removed a few days before. Russell said the Union troops "took" three Negroes from Morris Sanchez, but none from Mr. Baza, although they did confiscate three of his horses, one cart, all his poultry and hogs, potatoes, salt and butchered two beeves as well. They ". . . abused and insulted the women just as they pleased" while encamped in Baza's field on the bank of the river.<sup>46</sup>

Russell in general corroborated Dickison's report, although

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 860.

his version differed somewhat from the captain's, especially as regards the retreat. He indicated that the Negro troops did not march back overland to Orange Mills but were taken on board just off Baza's place. He added, "Every vestige of furniture was taken by the negroes from the residences of Doctor R. G. Mays, Major E. C. Simkins and Major A. H. Cole," both of the Quartermaster Department, C. S. A.

Baza was taken prisoner, but he later escaped. On the way back down the river, the Federals stopped again at the Du Pont plantation and demanded the Negroes who'd been hidden" . . . stating if the negroes were not immediately delivered, they would burn the houses. Mrs. Du Pont, who was much alarmed, accordingly delivered up the negroes, against their wishes and urgent appeals."<sup>47</sup>

Russell was also taken prisoner, but was later released. While incarcerated however, he talked with Montgomery who told him he was going to occupy Palatka. Montgomery said, according to Russell:

That he would have a force of some five thousand men at Palatka in a few days; that they had been acting in a mild way all along, but that they intended now to let us feel what war actually was; that the United States Marshal for Florida was along and pointed him out to me; that all the negroes were declared free and he intended to take all he could find.<sup>48</sup>

Russell praised Dickison; he visited the wharf at Palatka and substantiated the story of "the great quantity of blood on the wharf and pieces of bone."

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<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 361.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

He suggested in his letter to Finegin that some protection be provided the settlers. There were many cattle east of the river and the " . . . enemy are continually butchering for the use of their troops, and the citizens are entirely helpless to defend themselves."<sup>49</sup>

There were Federal troops, Negro troops, in the Palatka vicinity in March of 1863. On the tenth the First Regiment of South Carolina Volunteers, Colonel T. W. Higginson, and the Second South Carolina Volunteers, Colonel James Montgomery, landed and occupied Jacksonville. This prompted Brigadier-General R. Saxton to write to Edward Stanton, the Secretary of War on March 14, "It is my belief that scarcely an incident in this war has caused a greater panic throughout the whole Southern coast than this raid of the colored troops in Florida."<sup>50</sup>

He was right. This appearance of armed Negroes was what the South had feared for decades; that an insurrection among the slaves was constantly imminent, but in actuality, seldom occurred.

The Union account of this March skirmish was considerably different from those related above. In a letter from Colonel John D. Rust of the Eighth Maine Volunteers to Lieutenant Colonel Charles G. Halpine on April 2, 1863, Rust related that he'd arrived in Jacksonville on March 23, shortly before Colonel Montgomery and one hundred and twenty men boarded the gunboat U. S. S. Paul Jones and went upriver to Palatka. During the foray, they captured one lieutenant and fourteen men. The

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 681.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 226.

lieutenant escaped by violating parole. A considerable amount of rifles, horses and other property valued at several thousand dollars was captured. The Union forces withdrew from Jacksonville on March 31. During the evacuation, several fires were lit, "a portion undoubtedly by secesh," and "perhaps twenty-five buildings were destroyed."<sup>51</sup>

Which to believe? Russell's story of substantiation was written late enough so that he and Dickison could have collaborated, and there was some not inconsiderable variation between their stories. There certainly was a discrepancy in the number and disposition of the troops involved. There was one vessel too many in one instance, and no mention was made of Federal losses. The taking of the Negroes from the Du Pont Plantation also smacked of having been tinted; General Saxton related in his letter to the Secretary of War that the Negroes were " . . . collecting at Jacksonville from all quarters."<sup>52</sup>

It was possible that the Union record was lost, but then future relations between Dickison and Federal forces also varied considerably, as shall be seen.

At any rate, on April 11, 1863, General Finegan, Dickison's superior, endorsed the latter's report, adding that Lieutenant-Colonel Liberty Billings, a Negro of the First South Carolina, was wounded four times in the attempted landing. Dickison was commended for his action at Palatka, and the " . . . good services of this company ever since its entrance upon the active duties

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 226.

of the service."<sup>53</sup> Dickison said nothing regarding this in his report, nor did Russell incorporate it into his letter. Perhaps it was a type of propaganda; perhaps Dickison, operating nearly completely independently and as absolute commander of his force submitted the version he felt his superiors preferred to hear.

On May 16, 1863, General Finegan contacted the Union Naval Commander on the St. Johns. He wanted no more communication made anywhere in the valley under a flag of truce. Contact between Confederate and Union agents would occur only at Fernandina. In addition, there was to be no mail delivered for residents in Confederate states. The justification was that he felt the Federals were using the truce flag "improperly."<sup>54</sup> Perhaps the Confederacy was simply feeling the squeeze.

Opposing forces always have had deserters and defectors. The Civil War was no exception according to Acting Master Frank B. Meriam of the U. S. S. Norwich. On October 18, 1863, he wrote that three more deserters from the Confederacy had defected for a grand total of fourteen for the month. According to Meriam, thirty-two of eighty-two men in one company simply quit at Jacksonville.<sup>55</sup>

Not all the residents entertained the same idea however. Lieutenant Commander S. L. Breese, commanding the U. S. S. Ottawa, wrote on November 27, 1863, that there was " . . . no Union

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 945.

<sup>55</sup>U. S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XV, 1902, p. 51.

sentiment prevailing here that can be turned into good account."<sup>56</sup>

The greatest battle in Florida occurred at Olustee on February 20, 1864. After a decisive Confederate victory, the Union forces withdrew to the St. Johns Valley. One unit, Light Battery "C" of the Third Rhode Island Heavy Artillery arrived at Palatka several days later. Here, according to Patrick Egan, one of the members of the unit, occurred "the famous cow incident." For days after the incident occurred, the whole brigade was asking, "Who killed the cow?", especially when the commanding officer, Colonel Barton, was near.

Barton had his quarters in the home of a ". . . little old lady who had a very nice residence" and the only cow in Palatka. She happened to be the only white woman in the town. Barton apparently was not the most popular commanding officer. Seeking ways to antagonize him, his men decided the cow was a good way of evening the score, and, one day when it was walking around eating, they slaughtered the animal. Two things were accomplished by this according to Egan; first, the cow was "made into steak and liver"; and second, "no longer was it supplying Barton with milk."<sup>57</sup>

"The fun began" when the cow failed to show for its regular milking. Men were sent out from headquarters to search for it but they returned unsuccessful in their efforts. The men of Company "C" were suspected, and probably known to be capable of

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>57</sup>Patrick Egan, "The Florida Campaign with Light Battery C, Third Rhode Island Heavy Artillery," *Soldiers and Sailors Historical Society of Rhode Island, Personal Narratives, 6th Series No. 10.*

committing such an act, for the next day the provost marshal began asking questions in the quarters of that company. Naturally, no one knew anything. The pressure intensified the following day when Barton told the non-commissioned officers that he knew the cow had last been seen in the vicinity of Company "C's" camp. He only wanted the name of the man who killed the cow, but the non-coms said knew nothing.

On the next day the whole company was called to fall in. Nine men, one sergeant, one corporal and seven privates; were accused of having killed the cow, and the two non-coms were reduced to the ranks and the privates were put on bread and water and in the guard house. They were to remain there until someone identified the individuals involved in the slaughter.

They remained in the stockade for three days, then a picket faked an attack. During an attack, all men were expected to defend the camp, and the seven privates were released to man their weapons. This ended their incarceration, and the incident, for they couldn't be punished twice for the same offense. Barton never did discover who the perpetrators of the act were.

The military purpose for the contingent stationed at Palatka was to capture a "notorious rebel named Thigpen" who'd been supplying the Confederates with food. Mounted, twelve men of Company "C", led by Captain James and two "crackers" as guides, moved quickly on Thigpen and accosted him and a tax collector. They found large quantities of bacon and confiscated what they could carry, destroying the rest by burning all the out-buildings on his place. A total of thirteen people were arrested. Thigpen was the most important of them all, and was

sent to Hilton Road, Virginia, where he was tried and sentenced to three years imprisonment at Fort La Fayette.

When Company "C" left Palatka, it had to march overland to Picolata because there was "not sufficient river transportation" to accommodate them.<sup>58</sup>

The Seventh Connecticut Volunteers also were stationed at Palatka after the fight at Olustee. One, Private Milton M. Woodford, wrote a letter describing the place.

On April 16, 1864, Woodford's company traveled to Palatka as a guard unit on the steamer "Mary Benton." After the vessel docked, he strolled through the town noting:

Some would say it is a rough looking place, but I think it is beautiful. Art has done very little for the place, but Nature very much. One or two places give evidence that they are owned by northern men; the houses are large and comfortable and painted; and the grounds are laid out with task.

The river is full of fish, and we caught some nice ones weighing five to seven pounds.

When the vessel left:

We had on board two or three families of refugees, and such another miserable looking set! O dear! It beggars description. I pitied the poor creatures. They looked as though they had been starved; had just enough clothes to cover them, southern homespun; their faces a sickly pale, and ignorance stamped on them as plainly as though written with pen or pencil.<sup>59</sup>

The addition of the Fourth Georgia Calvary to Dickison's force in March, 1864, allowed him to apply his guerrilla tactics on a broader scale, challenging larger Federal forces that manned

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<sup>58</sup>Egan, p. 22ff.

<sup>59</sup>Vaughn D. Barnet (ed.), "A Connecticut Yankee After Olustee," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXVII No. 4 (April, 1949) p. 400ff.



several posts in the upper reaches of the valley.<sup>60</sup> This addition meant that Dickison had to relinquish his command. On March 30, General Anderson reported to Brigadier General Thomas Jordan that Colonel W. B. Tabb was commanding the Confederate forces in the Palatka area.<sup>61</sup> The order came from Beauregard to attempt to isolate the Union troops at Palatka.<sup>62</sup>

The Union command was aware of Dickison's reinforcement. Brigadier General William Birney, United States Army, wrote Captain G. B. Balch of the United States Navy that "Dixie" had a force of four hundred men near Fort Gates and that it was apparent that an attempt to cross the river to raid Union outposts would be made. One lighter (barge) had been built and another was raised so as to ferry the troops across the river.<sup>63</sup>

Naval activity also intensified during March; Colonel William B. Barton of the Forty-eighth New York Infantry (Perry's Regiment)<sup>64</sup> reported the capture of the small Confederate steamer "Sumter" on Lake George on March 13. After the capture, the vessel was armed and sent after the "Hattie Brock," suspected of having one hundred and fifty bales of cotton on board. In this report, Barton mentioned a Confederate force located about six

<sup>60</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXV, Part II Correspondence, 1891, p. 333.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 366.

<sup>63</sup>U. S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. LIII, P. 113.

<sup>64</sup>Abraham J. Palmer, The History of the Forty-Eighth Regiment--New York Volunteers--In the War for the Union, 1861-1865; Brooklyn.

miles inland from Palatka. They had an artillery unit of some twelve guns. The recipient of this report, Brigadier General Truman Seymour requested that the U. S. S. Ottawa, or another gunboat, be dispatched to Palatka immediately.<sup>65</sup>

Barton's report from his headquarters in Palatka dated March 15, included what Seymour relayed, and the statement, "I believe that I can capture the only remaining steamer "Silver Spring" if the steamer "Island City" can be sent to me for a short time."<sup>66</sup>

Assistant Adjutant General, Captain P. R. Chadwick, also received a report from Barton dated March 7. The U. S. S. Ottawa had not yet arrived. The "Hunter" was supposed to have arrived at Picolata, but hadn't shown as yet either. He also indicated that the U. S. S. Columbine had not yet returned.

Barton summarized an attack by Confederate cavalry on his pickets about one o'clock p.m., March 16, 1864. Two of his men were captured and the rest were driven back to the post. He deployed a line of infantry which subsequently occupied the area held by the pickets, and added, "The loss of these men was in a great measure owing to the imperfection of their mounts and equipment."<sup>67</sup> He referred to other fortifications as nearing completion closer to the town itself.

Another engagement occurred in late March or early April,

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<sup>65</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. LIII, p. 374.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 376ff.

according to Dickison, some time after the sinking of the "Maple Leaf."<sup>68</sup> The Confederates planned an all-out attack on the Federal force at Palatka. General Finegan was to command the operation, having orders to attack and hold the town, but he relied on moving his force by railroad, which was so disrupted that "more hours were covered than miles." He was still in Waldo at the time he was supposed to be attacking Palatka. The plan was scrapped when the Federals reinforced the garrison at Jacksonville. Dickison and one hundred and forty-five men were ordered to harrass the five thousand Union troops in Palatka.<sup>69</sup>

After crossing the Sweetwater, Dickison and a detachment of the Fourth Georgia Calvary captured a Federal outpost. Dickison and sixteen men reputedly killed five and wounded four Federals in some forty minutes. The Heights were taken and the pickets were driven in. Lieutenant McEaddy was credited with capturing another post with eight men in an attack which occurred almost simultaneously.

Another confrontation ensued when Dickison was ordered to reconnoitre the area. A four hour battle ended with the Union force retreating before nightfall. Their casualties numbered eleven killed and twenty-two captured. No Confederate losses were sustained.

Dickison wrote his book in 1899; he was at least in his eighties, which may account for the discrepancy noted. The

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<sup>68</sup>See below.

<sup>69</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. LIII, p. 84.

Federal records do not indicate, other than Barton's report, any contact with Dickison about this time.

Things came to a head in May. On the nineteenth, Dickison crossed the St. Johns with a force of thirty-five men (according to his account) and Captain H. A. Gray. The unit marched overland some seven miles to Welaka and attacked a Federal post at daybreak from three sides. The pickets were the first to be captured and then Dickison demanded the unconditional surrender of the post. The Union commander, a captain, complied and surrendered his command of sixty-two men and a lieutenant. All this was achieved without firing a single weapon.<sup>70</sup> When Major General Sam Jones, C. S. A., reported this victory to General S. Cooper, the number of men captured had been reduced to fifty-six, which included the two officers, while there were fifty men reported to be in Dickison's company.<sup>71</sup>

The Union report contrasted even more. Brigadier General George H. Gordon, U. S. A., wrote to Captain W. L. M. Burger, the Assistant Adjutant General on March 27, 1864, that a report had been received on March 20 from Colonel Noble, commander of the Federal troops east of the river, informing him that fifteen men and one officer had been surprised and captured by an enemy force.<sup>72</sup> He was referring to the Welaka outpost, for another report was received from Noble on the twenty-first, stating that

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<sup>70</sup>J. J. Dickison, Military History . . . ., p. 87.

<sup>71</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, p. 396.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 394.

another, smaller force (at Saunders) had been captured, and that some four hundred Confederate troops were moving north on the east side of the river.<sup>73</sup> On May 20, Gordon requested aid from Commander Balch in transporting troops up the river to attempt to take Dickison and four hundred men who had captured the Union outpost at Saunders and threatened the garrison at Volusia.<sup>74</sup>

Gordon started upriver the next day aboard the U. S. S. Ottawa and the "little steamtug" U. S. S. Columbine. He was reinforced at Picolata by six companies of Colonel Beecher's 157th New York, some six hundred fifty to seven hundred men all told. The army vessel "Houghton" and several naval vessels were used to transport the men. On Sunday, May 22, the convoy landed opposite Palatka where sandbags were filled and used, in addition to one bale of hay, to bolster defenses aboard the "Columbine." Part of the force then disembarked to march overland while the "Columbine" moved upriver to Volusia to protect the outpost there. The U. S. S. Ottawa was to accompany the "Columbine" as far as the mouth of Dunn's Creek and the "Houghton" was to remain with the gunboat for protection.

Twenty-five men and two officers of Beecher's command were placed on the "Columbine" to defend it, and the captain of the vessel was instructed to send up a flare if help was necessary. Gordon planned to march overland after crossing Haw Creek, and then to proceed to Volusia, scouring the countryside

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>U. S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XV, p. 437.

as he advanced.

The garrison at Volusia was secure, and had heard of the capture of the outposts at Saunders and Welaka which had "rather shamefully surrendered, I was told, not a gun having been fired in defense."

Gordon heard a report that there were seven hundred Confederate troops at the Haw Creek crossing, so he planned his next maneuver in that direction. He instructed Colonel Noble to confiscate all the cattle in the area, and to send the "Columbine" back down the river.

General Gordon was on his way back to Jacksonville when he heard cannon fire from upriver at Picolata. He saw no flares however, so he assumed it was only the routine practice of the gunboats shelling suspected Confederate strongholds along the riverbank so as to minimize the danger of a surprise attack (and alert the Confederate troops). What Gordon had heard was an attack on the U. S. S. Ottawa and "Houghton" by Dickison's company supported by a battery of light artillery under Lieutenant Bates. Gordon's report had it that the attack occurred off Orange Mills and that the "Houghton" was struck three times by twelve pound shot. No great harm had been suffered.<sup>75</sup>

Lieutenant Commander Breese of the U. S. S. Ottawa reported on May 28, 1864, that he had put two hundred and seventy troops on his gunboat and one hundred on the "Columbine" at Picolata on the way upriver, and heaved to at Palatka (on the east bank) at

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<sup>75</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, p. 395.

4:15 p.m. where the troops disembarked and prepared to march upriver to Dunn's Creek where they were to part; the gunboat remained there, and the "Columbine" went to Volusia to determine the situation at that station and return immediately if the outpost had been captured. The "Columbine" was a smaller and faster vessel than the "Ottawa," and could safely navigate the upper river. It was " . . . protected by fifty sandbags and some bales of hay."<sup>76</sup> Breese went on to say that he took up a position opposite Brown's landing, and then the "Houghton" pulled up and anchored just astern. Breese didn't know what the transport was doing there until it was explained that the "Houghton" should stay with the U. S. S. Ottawa for protection.

At 7:20 p.m. on May 22, 1864, a cannon ball hit the "Ottawa." Breese reported that the enemy had " . . . four field pieces of from six to twelve pounders . . . and fired shell, grape and solid shot at us . . . ." He continued, "After the third discharge of the one hundred and fifty pound rifle they ceased firing entirely and retreated, I presume."<sup>77</sup> The gunboat fired at the enemy on the shore from 7:50 to 9:20 p.m., aiming at the gun flashes after dark. At 9:45 p.m., it anchored off the mouth of Dunn's Creek and got underway the next day at 9:45 a.m. It had been struck by grape thirty-seven times and took a shell through the smokestack, but no casualties had been suffered.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>U.S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XV, P. 445.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

Dickison's report contrasted quite significantly. He was accompanied by Lieutenant Mortimer Bates and a detachment of twenty-five troops manning one twelve pound howitzer and one Napoleon gun. This unit joined him at his camp on the hill three miles west of Palatka. He dismounted his men and marched them into town when he saw two gunboats and four transports coming upriver. In Palatka, he positioned his troops in entrenchments constructed by Federal forces when they'd occupied Palatka earlier. He acknowledged that the transports disembarked the troops on the east bank opposite Palatka and that one "gunboat" (the "Columbine") moved upriver. Dickison attempted to intercept this vessel at Brown's Landing, but was five minutes late in moving his force to that point. He was on his way back to Palatka when a courier met and informed him that another vessel was headed upriver. He then returned to Brown's Landing, arriving there at dusk, and discovered that the U. S. S. Ottawa, armed with thirteen guns, two of which were rifled two-hundred pounders, and the "Houghton" were anchored some two hundred yards from the landing, which was on the west side of the river. He claimed to have fired twenty-eight rounds at the two vessels before he received any response from them. The transport, according to Dickison, moved downriver immediately, but the gunboat, disabled, was unable to move for thirty hours.<sup>79</sup> Here again were conflicting reports, based in part on hypothetical presumptions as far as the type and number weapons involved was concerned, and in the Union case, perhaps a lack of

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<sup>79</sup>J. J. Dickison, Military History . . . ., p. 93ff.



geographical knowledge on the part of General Gordon. There may or may not have been one hundred men aboard the "Columbine" when it went up to Volusia, but more on that below.

On May 24, Dickison achieved a signal victory over the Union forces on the river by destroying the "Columbine" on its return trip from Volusia. He must have anticipated the vessel's return fairly for on the twenty-third he sent Bates' battery and a band of sharpshooters to Horse Landing six miles up the river from Palatka, where the artillery was placed on the wharf. The sharpshooters were positioned to the left (north) of the wharf. When the "Columbine" approached, Dickison fired on it from a distance of sixty yards. The vessel grounded some two hundred yards downstream from the wharf, about one hundred yards from where the riflemen were hidden. A heavy fire was poured into the "Columbine" and after a forty-five minute engagement, it surrendered. Bates boarded the vessel, and, according to him, only sixty-six of the one hundred and forty-eight men aboard were still alive. One-third of these were wounded when Bates accepted the surrender. No casualties were inflicted on the Confederates.

Dickison reported that the "Columbine" was ". . . almost entirely new, and considered a very fast and superior boat."<sup>80</sup>

Again, the time element must be considered; thirty years elapsed between the actual experience and the date of the writing of his book. His report to Captain W. G. Barth, the Assistant Adjutant General at Lake City, dated May 24, 1864, varied

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 94ff.

somewhat, although it was more complete.

The battle report substantiated the section of light artillery commanded by Bates and was more specific regarding the sharpshooters who numbered twenty. In his words:

After the second fire from our battery she ("Columbine") became disabled. We continued to pour canister and solid shot, while our sharpshooters kept a constant and well directed fire until she became unable to manage her guns.

The rudder on the vessel had been shot away. "She consequently became unmanageable and grounded." When the colors fell, a white flag was hoisted and the battle ended after forty-five minutes of fighting.

Dickison reported that he'd captured seven officers, one non-combatant, nine seamen and forty-seven enlisted Negroes. In addition, ". . . about twenty-five were killed and drowned," and Captain Daniels and five Negroes of those captured were wounded. One naval lieutenant was also killed.<sup>81</sup>

His report continued:

After the surrender several of the men jumped overboard and swam for the opposite shore, but most of them were drowned. The deck presented a horrible scene, the dead and wounded lay weltering in blood. Most of the negro troops have owners in North Carolina and Florida. The two Dahlgren guns and machinery of the boat can be saved from the wreck as soon as proper transportation can be obtained.<sup>82</sup>

He itemized the equipment and arms captured. The inventory included: forty-two rifles; twenty-eight cartridge boxes; two thousand rounds of ammunition; thirty-five bayonets; five swords; eight pistols; four cutlasses; two nautical compasses;

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<sup>81</sup>U.S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, p. 397.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

two chests of bomb fuses; two spy glasses; three stands of colors and two boats. Dickison requested that one of the swords be presented to Lieutenant Bates " . . . for his gallant conduct."<sup>83</sup> Bates received his sword, and Dickison was awarded with another, presented by General Anderson.

The Federal account contrasted significantly with the report of Dickison. Draver Edwards, one of the men on the "Columbine" who escaped by swimming to the east bank of the river, related his experience on June 18, 1864. He said the "Columbine" arrived at Volusia at 11:30 p.m. on May 22. Finding the contingent safe, the vessel started back down the river at noon on the next day. About four o'clock, near Horse Landing, the "Columbine" began shelling the woods. When the craft was abreast of Horse Landing the Confederate fire began at a distance of thirty yards. One of the first shots dismantled the steering gear; another ruptured the main steam line, and the vessel, out of control, ran aground. The captain, Acting Ensign Frank Sanborn, returned the fire until about six p.m. and then surrendered. Edwards estimated that twenty men were killed or wounded. The army contingent on board was from the Thirty-Fifth United States Colored, commanded by Captain Daniels. Four of these men drowned while attempting to swim to shore. One sailor, William Moran, also drowned attempting to escape. When Bates approached to accept the surrender, Edwards escaped and met three more survivors from the "Columbine," members of the Thirty-Fifth, on shore. They made their way to St. Augustine in five days.

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

Sixteen men were killed or missing; five privates were wounded, and Acting Master's Mate John Davis was killed and his body was burned aboard the vessel. Edwards claimed the Confederates burned the "Columbine" ". . . without removing an article of value."<sup>84</sup>

On May 30, Lieutenant Commander Balch, captain of the U. S. S. Pawnee, wrote that Breese was correct in taking the U. S. S. Ottawa only as far as Brown's Landing. He explained to the Commander of the St. Johns River Flotilla at Jacksonville that the river above that point was too narrow for a vessel the size of the gunboat to negotiate.<sup>85</sup>

General Gordon, in his report of May 27, included a deposition from the Thirty-Fifth Colored, relating to the "Columbine" incident. Added to the story was the report that a detachment had captured a prisoner on the morning of May 24, who stated that Dickison ". . . captured a little boat and two small guns," and then ". . . burned the boat."<sup>86</sup>

Major General Sam Jones, C. S. A., wrote General Cooper on May 27, that Dickison had captured the "Stemaer Columbine" and two heavy Dahlgren guns, killing twenty and capturing sixty-five men in the process. Also captured were sixty-five stands of arms. The boat itself was burned.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup>U. S., Official Records . . . ., Series One, Vol. XV, p. 448ff.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., p. 447.

<sup>86</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, p. 395.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 396.

Only two things were certain: the "Columbine" was destroyed; and there was a great deal of contrast attendant to the several versions rendered. Militarily speaking, the loss was not all that significant; the "Columbine" was only one of many Union vessels on the river and couldn't have served more than a secondary function at best. It was Dickison's greatest achievement, considering the situation of land forces versus a naval vessel, and was a great psychological victory for him.

Another Union vessel was destroyed on the St. Johns on April 1, 1864. The "Maple Leaf," a transport, sank in seven minutes some twelve miles from Jacksonville after striking a mine at four o'clock in the morning. The vessel was on its way to Jacksonville from Palatka, empty, having ferried troops to that place in company with the "Harriet A. Weed" and the "Hunter," the latter having remained in Palatka. No attempt was made to salvage the vessel, although the pilothouse was above the surface of the water.<sup>88</sup>

On the same day, the "Harriet A. Weed" was dispatched to Fort Gates, with twenty-five men of the New York One Hundred and Fifteenth Volunteers aboard commanded by Captain S. P. Smith. The troops surprised a contingent of the Fifth Georgia Cavalry and captured one sergeant and nine men. Thirteen horses were also taken in the ambush which was accomplished without firing a shot.<sup>89</sup>

On April 9, a letter from Brigadier General J. P. Hatch at

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<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 380.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 382.

Jacksonville to Brigadier General John W. Turner, reported that Palatka was quiet on April 8. Military activity included the movement of the Fourth Massachusetts Calvary and four companies of the Third New Hampshire Mounted Infantry overland to Palatka. The gunboats U. S. S. Unadilla and U. S. S. Pawnee were patrolling the river.<sup>90</sup>

A week later, on April 16, the "Hunter" also struck a mine near where the "Maple Leaf" sank and it, too, went to the bottom. It sank immediately after hitting the mine which had been churned up by the wake of the "Cosmopolitan" with which it was in convoy accompanied by the gunboat U. S. S. Norwich. One man drowned in the sinking.<sup>91</sup>

Palatka was evacuated on that date by the Federal forces. In a report to the Chief of Staff, Hatch said nothing had been abandoned; all the stores had been moved to Picolata. "Magazines, platforms for guns, and abatis were destroyed, and the garrison and all the inhabitants of the town were withdrawn without accident of any kind."<sup>92</sup>

Lieutenant Commander Breese reported Palatka as being deserted on April 28, although he was informed that Dickison had thirty men camped nearby.

The inactivity was soon to end however. On April 27, Captain M. Bailey was ordered to Palatka to patrol the area; no

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<sup>90</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, Part II Correspondence, p. 47.

<sup>91</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, p. 388.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 387.

patrol was to consist of less than fifteen men who were to " . . . collect all Negroes and slaughter all beef." Bailey was also warned to "Be particularly guarded against any surprise attack from Dickison's rebel calvary."<sup>93</sup> While at Palatka, Bailey was ordered to build two docks and drag the river for mines. No pilfering of any kind was to be tolerated and he was to confiscate all old corn, horses and teams, etc., and store them at Palatka.

Bailey was reinforced two days later by the Third Colored who were to build a fortified earthworks sufficient to accommodate three hundred men. New orders stipulated that patrols were to venture as far west as Orange Creek and if no Confederates were encountered, to push on to Silver Springs. They were instructed to look for the lenses for a lighthouse (not identifying it) which had been taken by the rebels early in the war. These were valued at \$50,000.00 and supposedly were stored someplace between Ocala and Palatka. The order to confiscate all horses, mules, wagons, and cotton was reiterated.<sup>94</sup>

A second skirmish at Palatka in the summer of 1864 occurred about August 1. In a report dated August 4, Brigadier General John P. Hatch wrote Major General J. G. Foster commanding the Department of the South that the Eighth U. S. Colored arrived at Palatka just in time to prevent the capture of a twenty-five man picket which had been driven into the trenches by a Confederate calvary force. One officer and two privates had been captured.

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<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

All the troops had been withdrawn by the time of writing.<sup>95</sup>

Dickison referred to an attack on the Federal post at Palatka, although he dates the engagement as being about July 15. His version was that Lieutenant McEaddy engaged the enemy in a "hot fight." Dickison came to reinforce McEaddy and led charge after charge on the outpost some six miles from Palatka. Dickison and thirty of his company were in "hand to hand combat" when his son Charlie was felled. The Federal forces ceased firing suddenly, and Dickison, thinking they were surrendering, moved down the hill to prevent any of them from escaping. When the charge began, the Union troops commenced firing once again and Sergeant Charlie Dickison fell with a fatal wound in the heart. He died, according to the account, in his father's arms.

Dickison then pulled back to his camp (Call), some six miles distant. The body of his son was taken to Orange Springs by Sergeant Crews and six men of the company for burial. Dickison claimed to have buried fourteen Federal troops the next day. After the battle when the Union troops were withdrawn, Dickison moved into Palatka and occupied it for several weeks.<sup>96</sup>

Another Federal foray into the middle valley area occurred on August 18, when Hatch took four companies of the One Hundred and Fourth Pennsylvania Regiment and "all steamers" to Palatka to confiscate all the contraband he could find. The vessels

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<sup>95</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XXXV, Part II Correspondence, p. 215.

<sup>96</sup>J. J. Dickison, p. 100ff.



included the transports "Canonicus," "Delaware," "Houghton" and "Island City." He didn't tarry long, for Dickcison reported on August 24 that there were no Federals in Palatka on that date.

The war returned to the Palatka area on February 5, 1865. A Confederate report dated at Headquarters, South Florida Forces, Waldo, East Florida, on February 9, 1865, stated that Company "H" of the Second Florida Calvary, left Waldo on February 1. Lieutenants McCardell and McEaddy commanded the company of sixty-four men. This company was part of a force which included Company "B" of the same regiment, thirty-three men led by Lieutenant McLeod, and Company "H" of the Fifth Florida Battalion, Lieutenants Brantley, Haile and Haynes commanding.

On February 2, they crossed the St. Johns at Palatka and headed north toward Picolata. Unable to make a successful attack, they moved toward St. Augustine and Jacksonville. At the former place they captured seventeen Federal troops including a captain, a lieutenant and one ambulance. About this time they heard of a Federal raiding party up the valley so they departed for Volusia, splitting the command. One detachment headed toward Pellicier's Creek via Kings Road; the other by Cowpen Branch. Near Braddock's farm (in the Crescent City area) an advance group captured one member of a small party of Federal troops which the rebels felt indicated a larger force was near. The Confederates successfully ambushed the Union contingent, fifty-one men, including a lieutenant colonel and two captains. Five Federals were killed, one of whom was the adjutant.

Eighteen deserters and Tories were also captured and ten wagons and teams loaded with nine thousand pounds of seed cotton

were confiscated. A number of arms and horses were also taken. The Confederate force crossed the river on February 6, without the loss of a man.<sup>97</sup>

Dickison's version varied somewhat from the above account. He wrote that on February 2, he was in the deserted city of Palatka where he crossed the river and headed toward Picolata. One flatboat was used to ferry his command over, and because only twelve men and horses could be accommodated on the craft, the transfer took all night. He then credited himself with the Braddock's Farm victory, and stated that he recrossed the St. Johns at Horse Landing.<sup>98</sup>

As noted above, Dickison was not in command, much less present, during the operation.

The Federal account was dated February 5, and revealed that Lieutenant Colonel Albert H. Wilcoxson, 17th Connecticut, Captains Betts and French, Lieutenant Chatfield and about forty enlisted men were guarding ten wagons loaded with cotton when they were ambushed by approximately eighty Confederate calvarymen. Wilcoxson sustained three wounds and the adjutant, Chatfield, was killed.<sup>99</sup> No reference was made as to the disposition of the remainder of the command.

The Braddock's Farm fray ended military belligerency in the area during the Civil War Era. Dickison, promoted to the rank

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<sup>97</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XLVII, Part I Reports, 1895, p. 1135.

<sup>98</sup>J. J. Dickison, p. 123.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., p. 166.

of colonel on April 5, reputedly took part in the escape of Judah P. Benjamin and John C. Breckinridge by raising a life-boat he'd taken off the "Columbine" and hidden in a lake near Palatka by sinking it. The boat took the two up the St. Johns to a point opposite Indian River where it was portaged to that stream and used again to sail down to Jupiter where a larger vessel took the two men to Cuba, arriving there June 11, 1865.<sup>100</sup>

Dickison was presented a horse on April 8 by General William A. Owens of Marion County. On May 20, the ladies of Florida gave him a sword, ". . . a feeble testimonial of their thanks and gratitude for your gallant services in defense of the State of Florida . . . ."101

Dickison acknowledged the gift by saying:

May no act of mine cause you to regret the high compliment this day bestowed upon me, for I sacredly pledge you that this good sword shall never rest in its scabbard, until the last armed foe is driven from our land. We need your prayers and words of cheer--with these we can be invincible, for our cause is just, and God will, in his own good time, give us the victory.<sup>102</sup>

According to his wife, Dickison was presented a pair of silver spurs by Mrs. F. L. Freyer, Mrs. H. L. Hart, Mrs. J. W. Pearson and others on May 7, 1865. The spurs were ". . . made from old heirlooms and relics of silver long preserved with scrupulous care, melted in a crucible cut from a fire brick,

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<sup>100</sup>Mary Elizabeth Dickison, p. xviii.

<sup>101</sup>Samuel Proctor (ed.), Florida A Hundred Years Ago (Tallahassee: Florida Library and Historical Commission, 1965) p. 3.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

fashioned entirely with a hammer by our Kind Friend, Doctor George E. Hawes."<sup>103</sup>

The Confederate surrender in Florida occurred on May 10, 1865, in Tallahassee. Dickison's Company "H" was paroled at Waldo ten days later, given the following:

Certificate of Parole

Florida, \_\_\_\_\_, 1865

\_\_\_\_\_ of Company \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Regiment, having this day surrendered, by Major General Sam Jones, commanding Confederate forces in the State of Florida, to Brigadier General Israel Vogdes, commanding United States forces in said State, in compliance with a military convention made on April 26, 1865, at Bennett's House, near Durham's Station, North Carolina, between General Joseph E. Johnston, of the Confederate Army, and Major General W. T. Sherman, U. S. Army, and having given his individual obligation and parole in writing not to take up arms against the U. S. Government nor to do any act hostile thereto, until properly released from the effect of this obligation in such manner as shall be mutually approved by the respective authorities, he is hereby permitted to return to his home in \_\_\_\_\_. He will not be disturbed by the U. S. authorities so long as he observes his obligation and the laws in force where he may reside.

By order of Brigadier-General Israel Vogdes, U. S. Volunteers, Commanding U. S. Forces in the District of Florida.<sup>104</sup>

Colonel Dickison was appointed Adjutant General of Florida in 1877 and in 1888, when the Florida Division of the United Confederate Veterans was organized, he was elected commander, and served six terms with the title of major general. He died in Ocala on August 23, 1902, and was buried in his Confederate uniform, on August 26 in Evergreen Cemetery in Jacksonville.

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<sup>103</sup>Mary Elizabeth Dickison, p. 219.

<sup>104</sup>U. S., The War of the Rebellion . . . ., Series One, Vol. XLVII, Part III Correspondence, p. 485.

So it ended. The dream failed and the issue was settled. The Union mark has been made, even in the cemetery just north of Johnson, in western Putnam County, where ten Federal troops were buried.

TABLE 14  
FEDERAL TROOPS INTERRED AT JOHNSON<sup>a</sup>

Name	Company	Regiment
Ackerman, R. H.	A	20th Maine Infantry
Baker, Almond	B	143rd Pennsylvania Infantry
Coffey, John J.	H	9th New York Infantry
Cole, Albert W.	C	3rd Wisconsin Cavalry
Reed, John	I	18th Pennsylvania Infantry
Reed, Herbert W.	K	20th Maine Infantry
Russe, Charles F.	F	46th New York Infantry
Saxon, William	D	6th Ohio Infantry
Smith, G. C.	E	5th Massachusetts
Tweedy, James A., Sergeant	K	21st Kentucky Infantry

<sup>a</sup>Veterans' Graves Registration--Carleton Cemetery North of Johnson (St. Petersburg, Florida: Disabled American Veterans, Florida Service Office, 1961).

Although Palatka had been deserted for the most part by her residents, it still played a role in operations throughout the war due again primarily to the position it enjoyed on the St. Johns River. The Civil War did not add to Palatka's development in the sense that the Second Seminole War had. There were fortifications erected, trenches dug, and men quartered, but not with permanence as was the early case. These developments were of the type that left a bad taste in the mouths of the inhabitants and were obliterated shortly after hostilities ceased. The only point made was related to the river; it was the main artery of East Florida's interior, and on it depended completely

the future of the town. The immediate future would not be rosy, although economic activity would increase. Man's determination to progress eventually pushed the river to an insignificant role as the railroad era approached. But neither the river nor the railroad would have the last voice. That would be left to the elements entirely.

## CHAPTER XII. COLONEL HUBBARD L. HART

Hubbard Hart was an ambitious and energetic man who, prior to coming to Palatka in 1855 at the age of thirty years, had been a horse trader in Pennsylvania and a stage line operator in Georgia. Probably the opportunity to take over a stage line with a great deal of potential attracted him to the area, but he may have had steamboating in the back of his mind even then.

He opened his stage line, which ran between Palatka and Tampa, in July, 1855. It was not likely that he actually drove one of the coaches; it was not his pattern to assume the physical operation of any of his enterprises. He hired people to fulfill these functions while he devoted his time to overseeing his existent interests and to developing new ones. One of his early employees was Richard J. Adams. Adams initially drove one of Hart's coaches, and then captained one of the steamers after the Hart Line was organized. Hart apparently divested himself of the stage line about the time he turned to the river. He may have had to. Others were introducing scheduled service to the valley settlements.

Much of his time was spent out of the area. He frequently travelled to New England, probably because of interests he had there; he was born in Vermont. He maintained communications with many of the places he'd been. In 1856 he received a letter from Boston asking his help in obtaining a parole for

an individual who'd been missing for several years; it was discovered that the missing person was in the Georgia State Penitentiary, apparently on a trumped-up charge and conviction.

Hart's second wife was a native of Boston, Miss Celia Thompson, who Hart married on May 22, 1884, in Palatka.<sup>1</sup>

Hart's activities for the period between his arrival and the Civil War centered on developing the stage line and his orange grove, claimed to be the finest in the state and one of the chief attractions in Palatka. His dynamicism accounted for his widely diversified interests, especially when one considered the only real competition came from other northerners who were in the area. He made it a point to meet the more influential of the residents of the state. In 1859 for example, he received a letter from J. J. Dickison, written on December 12 in reference to selling an unidentified manual to him. Dickison felt the price asked was too high (twelve dollars) and offered ten dollars for it. They were to rendezvous at a predetermined place, indicating their relationship was not entirely new. Dickison owned a substantial plantation in Marion County, and their relationship grew from the services Hart offered.

The steamboating venture began in 1860 when Hart purchased the "James Burt," reputedly the first steamer to operate on the Oklawaha River.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after this he obtained the "Silver

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<sup>1</sup>The sources for this chapter are primarily in the custody of Mrs. Dorothy Fox and Mr. Donald C. Thompson, descendants of the Colonel as a result of this marriage. These sources consist of private papers, photographs, log books, and in part, the diary of the subject.

<sup>2</sup>C. Bradford Mitchell, Paddle-Wheel Inboard (Salem: American Neptune, Inc., 1947) p. 3.



Springs." When the war broke out Hart ferried goods for the Confederacy to points on the St. Johns, usually upstream, where they were transported to the blockade runners. He initially operated out of Palatka, but when the Federal Navy secured control of the river to that point, he removed, with his first wife and daughter, to Orange Springs and continued to serve the Confederacy.

Both the "James Burt" and the "Silver Springs" were used at this time, perhaps under some type of lease to the Confederacy. The former ferried cotton to a point opposite the Mosquito River where the goods were transported overland to the vessels for trans-shipment. The trip was a two way operation for the vessels carried smuggled goods back to Fort Brooke at Orange Springs, which were then moved overland to Waldo, the Confederate headquarters during the Civil War.

One operation the "Silver Springs" was involved in occurred during May, 1862. Captain H. R. Teasdale of the Confederate Quartermaster Department wrote to George Allen, Captain of the "Silver Springs" at Orange Creek on May 26, directing him to take the boat to Volusia and pick up two eight-inch Columbiads which were buried near that place. He was also to inquire as to two eight-inch howitzers, supposedly some four miles from Volusia en route from that place to Smyrna. If he located these, he was to take them aboard also, and ferry the whole lot to Orange Creek. Whether he was successful has not been determined.<sup>3</sup>

Allen, a Hart employee, was given a draft deferrment on

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<sup>3</sup>Hart Papers.

March 7, 1862, by Doctor R. S. Butler at Palatka. The doctor certified that he had Phthiosis Palmonalis and was not fit to perform the duties of a soldier. There was a suggestion of Hart pressure as regarded the deferrment.<sup>4</sup>

The next addition to the Hart Line was the "General Sumter," sometimes referred to as "Sumter," on October 5, 1863. The transaction occurred at Orange Springs and involved the transfer of six thousand dollars from Hart to William V. Boyd, Attorney and Agent for the St. Mary's Steamboat Company, S. G. Cabell, President.<sup>5</sup>

Hart re-sold the "Sumter" to this company, on December 29, 1863, for \$13,000.00 and the assurance that his "Silver Springs" would not carry more than two hundred bales of cotton per year from the mouth of the Oklawaha to points up the St. Johns River, nor would the "Silver Springs" interfere in any fashion with the work of the "Sumter."<sup>6</sup>

Hart obtained the "Emma White" in January, 1864, according to a letter written by H. A. Gray to Doyle W. Samar, directing him to deliver the vessel to Hart. The letter was written on January 13 at Tallahassee.<sup>7</sup>

On March 23 or 24, 1864, the "Sumter" was captured by the U. S. S. Columbine. The "Sumter's" captain, W. W. Tumblin, surrendered the vessel, which was apparently unarmed, on Lake

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Mitchell, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>Hart Papers.

George.<sup>8</sup> He then piloted the U. S. S. Columbine, with the "Sumter" as its prize, to the location of the "Hattie Brock" which was also captured. There was a great deal to be considered because of the incident. To all outward appearances, the Colonel created a monopoly as regards river transportation in the area. Subsequently, all the captured vessels were returned to their owners when the war ended.<sup>9</sup>

Hart entered into an agreement with the Confederate Government on December 12, 1864, to lease the "Silver Springs" to April 29, 1865, after Appomattox, Captain H. R. Teasdale of the Confederate Quartermaster Department paid Hart \$11,000.00 for use of the vessel for fifty-five days at two hundred dollars per day. The period ended February 11, 1865. The arithmetic was off to the extent of four days, but perhaps there was more than one vessel involved.<sup>10</sup>

Hart was an opportunist almost to the extent that he appeared to have conflicting interests. He purchased three hundred dollars worth of Confederate bonds on March 27, 1864, which had an interest rate of four per cent per annum. He then entered the agreement as noted above. On February 21, 1865, he agreed with the Union Navy to undertake the clearing of obstructions on the Oklawaha River. The project was to be completed within three

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<sup>8</sup>See above; Tumblin was Palatka's first major.

<sup>9</sup>U. S., Civil War Naval . . . ., Part VI, p. 237.

<sup>10</sup>Hart Papers.

weeks of February 23, 1865, and included the river's course from Fort Brook to its mouth. The "Silver Springs" was the vessel involved and Hart was paid forty-five hundred dollars in advance by Captain J. W. Robertson on February 21.<sup>11</sup>

After receiving a parole at Waldo, Hart returned to Palatka. He diversified his interests in 1866 by obtaining the dealership for the James Suggett pump. Hubbard Hart was in the well-drilling business. He paid Suggett thirty-seven dollars for the exclusive right to sell pumps in Duval, Marion, Nassau and Putnam Countries.<sup>12</sup>

He had the "Griffin" constructed in 1866; the "Ocklawaha" was built during the winter of 1867-68 and the following winter the "Pansofkee" was built. These vessels were photographed, the first of the Hart boats to have been recorded for posterity. Sometime during 1869, the "Silver Springs" was disposed of, but the conditions under which this was accomplished have yet to be discovered.

Hart probably constructed the Putnam House after the Civil War. The first structure featured New England architecture, having three stories and an angled roof. The front porch, two stories high, was set back from the front of the building, probably so as to provide relief from the sun. Two white columns graced the structure which also boasted two chimneys at either end of the house. There were, from the ground floor at each end of the building, five windows on the first and second floors and

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

two on the third.<sup>13</sup>

A second structure was added in 1875. This building had a box-like appearance with a flat roof. It was placed a short distance from the initial hostelry and a garden was planted between the two. A white picket fence surrounded both buildings.

The "Pansofkee" was unusual in that it was a vessel having a shallower draft than the existent boats. Hart considered this uniqueness in anticipation that Senate Bill Fifty-Seven would pass, providing for a canal to be constructed across the peninsula in 1869. The Lake Pansofkee Steamboat and Land Company was to be the contractor for the project, but it remains to be determined whether the Colonel had any affiliation with this organization. At any rate, the canal was to be sixty feet wide and would accommodate vessels with up to a six foot draft. The "Griffin" and "Ocklawaha" were also small enough to navigate on such a canal.<sup>14</sup>

Hart's initial business came from the hauling of freight on the rivers. Passenger traffic was a thing of the future when the tourist function would play a more important role. He devised his schedule so as to coincide with the arrival at Palatka of deep water vessels such as the "Dictator" which provided service from Savannah. His operation was much more important after 1878 when the St. Johns bar was dredged, making Palatka the head of deep water navigation on the river. The "Griffin" was scheduled to head upriver after the "Dictator" arrived. It

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Mitchell, p. 10.

then piled the river south to Silver Springs, a round trip taking four days. The "Ocklawaha" left Palatka after the arrival of the "City Point." It travelled to Okahumpka, taking four days to complete the two hundred and thirty mile journey. The "Pansofkee" served the Dunn's Lake area.

These vessels were small and somewhat slow, thus their operations were primarily confined to the upper reaches of the river.

The "Ocklawaha" made a rather lucrative run to Fernandina during 1876-1877 where it met the "City of Austin," "City of Dallas," "Montgomery" and the "Reliance" from New York. The venture was short-lived however.<sup>15</sup> During the 1880's the railroad eliminated this river competition and by 1884 only special trips were made by these craft.<sup>16</sup>

The significance of the dredging of the St. Johns River bar was detrimental to Palatka for this led to the emergence of Jacksonville as the important deep water port. This emergence dated to 1885 when Jacksonville usurped Palatka's position as the port of registry for the upriver steamers.

The most enduring of the Hart Line vessels was built in Palatka in 1873. The "Okeehumkee" was eighty-four feet long, had a twenty-one foot beam and was eight feet deep. The craft displaced sixty-five tons and was powered by a one hundred and fifty horsepower steam engine.<sup>17</sup>

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qq <sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>17</sup>Johnson's Steam Vessels of the Atlantic Coast (New York: Eads Johnson Publishing Company, 1916) p. 132.

The "Okeehumkee" was named for a legendary Indian chief, and perhaps the town and lake of the same name. The spelling of the term had at least five variations. The vessel plied the river for a total of thirty-five years, and was the most rebuilt and remodeled of the Hart boats. Extensive repairs were made in 1888 at the yard on Hart Point after the craft struck a snag. Captain David A. Dunham, a long-time employee of the line and in charge of the boatyard, declared, "I find about three-fourths of the timbers nothing but dirt, so it is quite a job." In 1893 the "Okeehumkee" was completely rebuilt and a third deck was added to the superstructure.<sup>18</sup>

Hart did make a practice of hauling his vessels out annually, but any engine repairs that were necessary had to be made in Jacksonville for lack of local facilities.<sup>19</sup> The maintenance period usually lasted three weeks, between April and November of each year.

The next vessel Hart added to his fleet was the "Osceola." It was built in Palatka in 1874. Captain Dunham was its captain after 1879.

Competition was usually eliminated by Hart. The "Forester" and the "Tuskawilla" appeared during the late 1870's; both were built outside Palatka, the former at Norfolk and the latter at Leesburg. The "Forester" sank in the Oklawaha shortly after coming to the valley; it was the first of two vessels to sink in that river. The "Tuskawilla" ceased to appear on the ship's

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<sup>18</sup>Mitchell, p. 15.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

lists by 1887.<sup>20</sup>

Hart's interests centered on shipping after his initial successes with the enterprise. In 1878 he served as President of the Atlantic and Gulf Transit Company, an organization capitalized at \$20,000,000.00 which worked toward canalizing Florida, both breadth and length. The Florida Legislature approved the charter on February 19, 1874, and Governor George F. Drew approved it on April 1, 1878. Shares were one hundred dollars each, and Hart owned one hundred of these. The company was located in Jacksonville, and worked for the construction of a canal from Fernandina to Key West and another from the upper reaches of the St. Johns to Lake Okeechobee via the Kissimmee River. Another canal would follow the "Myaka River" to Sarasota Bay route. A total of fifteen hundred miles of canals was projected.<sup>21</sup>

The company purchased the Okeefenokee and St. Mary's Canal and Drainage Company on May 23, 1879, so as to obtain rights to conduct operations in the area held by that firm.<sup>22</sup>

Hart bought out Captain Henry A. Gray's "Marion" in November, 1880, retaining Gray as captain of the vessel. He paid two thousand dollars for the craft. The "Marion" caught fire on September 25, 1884, but the flames were confined to the area of the captain's quarters. The "Marion" operated on the river between Palatka and Enterprise primarily, but was apparently not

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>21</sup>Charter of the Atlantic and Gulf Transit Company (Washington: R. O. Polkinhorn, 1878).

<sup>22</sup>Hart Papers.



sufficient to handle all the business, for the "Astatula" was added to the same run in 1884, providing weekly service. The vessel was dropped from the registry lists in 1890, although no papers had been issued it for the two years prior to that time. What ultimately happened to the craft was not recorded.<sup>23</sup>

Hart added the "Astatula" in 1881. The vessel was built in Palatka, and had a length of eighty feet, a beam of twenty feet and a draft of three and one-half feet. It was the last vessel Hart had built while he lived, and the only one to have a full-length promenade deck. It also inaugurated electricity on the Oklawaha River in 1915 by using an electric searchlight. Prior to this time, the course of the river was lighted at night by pine-know fires built on top of steamboats using reflectors to light the way.

By 1887 the "Astatula" was the standby vessel for the run up the Oklawaha River; it was remodeled in 1894 and a third deck was added to its superstructure. Captain Howard piloted the craft during the 1890's, the destination by that time being Silver Springs, accommodating tourists primarily. In 1912, the vessel was deliberately grounded just off Hart's shipyard. Eventually it was stripped and rotted away.<sup>24</sup>

Hart and Captain Joe Smith, owner of the Rockledge Line, entered a partnership with John Richardson in 1877; the vessel involved in this relationship was the "Flora", an import built in New York in 1874 and taken to the St. Johns in 1877.

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<sup>23</sup>Mitchell, p. 28.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

Richardson sold his share to Hart and Smith by 1884. The "Flora" was one of the few vessels that operated on the lower St. Johns, but the competition was too great and Smith was persuaded to sell the "Flora" and purchase a vessel suited to up-river operations, specifically the Rockledge run. He acquired the "Waunita," a two year old vessel which had been sunk. This craft was towed to Palatka, arriving on September 13, 1884, but Dunham couldn't accommodate it until October 1. Dunham opposed attempting to repair the "Waunita," arguing the vessel wasn't worth the effort. Smith argued his case but to no avail. Ultimately the craft was towed to Jacksonville where it was repaired. Smith then sold the "Flora," but the Rockledge venture was up against railroad competition during 1885-1886. The "Waunita" sat on the ways at the boatyard until it was removed at Dunham's insistence; what eventually happened to it wasn't noted. It was dropped from the registry in 1899.<sup>25</sup>

The Colonel continued his practice of snuffing out competition whenever possible. In September, 1884, he had a barge, which had been fitted with a propeller by a man named Waddell who was operating the vessel on the Oklawaha River, stopped and seized because the craft wasn't registered at the customs house.<sup>26</sup>

Potential competitors knew of Hart's aversion to their activities; one Howard built the "Alligator" at Norwalk in 1888, fitting it out by stripping at least three unused vessels for

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 23ff.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

F. F. Harrison of Eureka. Harrison in turn informed Hart that if the Colonel would buy his operation and give him a job, he wouldn't compete. The Colonel apparently felt this jury-rigged operation was not much more than a bluff, for there was no record of his purchasing the "Alligator." It apparently sank in the upper reaches of the Oklawaha in 1903, then owned by a Doctor Moore of Philadelphia.<sup>27</sup>

Hart turned to the land in 1887. He knew by that time that the railroad posed a complete threat to the steamboat. Rather than continue to fight, he chose to enter the railroad business himself and operate it in conjunction with the boats, an idea he'd probably entertained since 1884. The Palatka and Northwestern Railway Company was organized on March 12, 1887, with Hubbard L. Hart as President and about ten individuals being the principal stockholders. The line had a charter to operate completely in the counties of Alachua, Clay, Gadsen, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Putnam and Taylor, and it was entitled to run extension lines into Bradford, Columbia, Levy, Madison, Suwannee and Wakulla Counties.<sup>28</sup> It went no further as regards operation however.

Four Hart Line vessels were operative in 1890; these were the "Astatula," "Marion," "Okeehumkee" and "Osceola." By that time it was obvious that to continue to rely on hauling freight as the chief source of income was sheer economic suicide. As a result, the vessels were either retired or remodeled to

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>28</sup>Hart Papers.

accommodate passenger traffic, primarily up the Oklawaha River to Silver Springs.

Hart was forced to this new aspect of steamboating by J. E. Lucas who built the "finest steamboat on the Oklawaha" to date, the "Metamora." The vessel, eighty-seven feet long, twenty-one feet wide and having a draft of over three feet, displaced one hundred and sixty-five tons. It was built at Palatka and boasted two tiers of staterooms with plenty of promenade deck space all around.<sup>29</sup>

Construction of the "Metamora" was slow and Hart was able to remodel the "Okeehumkee" before the former vessel was launched. It was a real renovation; a second deck was added and accommodations for passengers were expanded considerably. Not content with one double decker, he remodelled the "Astatula" in 1894, although this undertaking was not so thorough, for the added deck was narrower than the main deck of cabins.<sup>30</sup>

These excursion oriented craft left Palatka for Silver Springs on a daily basis. Hart, although using older boats, could boast of their greater speed, as well as his experience in Oklawaha steamboating.

More competition appeared however; the "Eureka," also owned by Lucas, was built at Silver Springs in 1890. It was not so popular because it was ". . . one of the five homeliest steamboats ever constructed."<sup>31</sup> Lucas cut his fares and exerted

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<sup>29</sup>Merchant Vessels of the United States: 33rd Annual List (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1901) p. 277.

<sup>30</sup>Mitchell, p. 31.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

more pressure on Hart's crumbling empire. By 1894 the "Osceola" was retired. About this time the "Marion" was also dropped from the shipping lists, but exactly what happened has not been determined.

Other difficulties plagued the Hart enterprises. A severe freeze occurred during the winter of 1894-95 and Hart lost nearly all his citrus interests. The only choice remaining was to completely eliminate his competition. This was accomplished in 1895 by the merger of the Ocklawaha River Navigation Company (the Hart Line) and the St. Johns and Ocklawaha River Line (Lucas' New Line) shortly before December 2, 1895.<sup>32</sup> This was Hubbard Hart's last commercial venture. He was killed in a streetcar accident in Atlanta on December 12, 1895.<sup>33</sup>

The Hart interests nearly folded. The whole of the operation passed into the hands of his in-law, the Thompsons of Boston, specifically his brother-in-law Roscoe H. Thompson. The Thompson family acquired an interest in the company earlier while Hart was attempting to adjust to accommodating the passenger traffic and the losses sustained to his grove during the freeze.

To all outward appearances, the rivalry between the Hart Line and the Lucas Line continued until 1903 when, on March 19, the "Metamora" sank near the mouth of the Oklawaha with twenty passengers aboard. At 3:22 a. m., the vessel lurched into the bank on the port side, crashed into the overhanging trees and

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<sup>32</sup>Hart Papers.

<sup>33</sup>Mitchell, p. 32.

careened back to midstream where it sank stern first in twenty feet of water. None of the passengers were lost, but two hands, Rufus King and Walter Watson, both of whom were asleep in the forecastle, drowned. The survivors were taken by rowboats and skiffs to Welaka, and then to Palatka aboard the "Fearless." It was reported that one passenger lost a thousand dollars worth of diamonds and another lost three hundred and fifty dollars in valuables.<sup>34</sup> The vessel was raised and taken to Welaka, but was never rebuilt. There was some question as to the cause of the mishap; some claimed the vessel hit a snag, but opposition claims maintained that the river had been cleared only recently. Others charged that the firewood had been improperly stowed and when the vessel rounded a bend in the river, the stack of wood shifted, causing the accident.

Jockeying of the stock of the Hart Line occurred for a three year period beginning in February, 1898. On the seventeenth the "Astatula" (registered at Jacksonville) and the "Okeehunkee" (registered at Bath, Maine) were sold by E. S. Crill to Carl C. Thompson for ". . . one dollar and other valuable considerations."<sup>35</sup> Roscoe H. Thompson next sold "one large barge" to Augustus L. Ordway on May 24, 1900, in an identical transaction. Then, on January 21, 1902, Carl C. Thompson sold the "Okkehunkee" to Ordway, who, on the same date, sold the "Astatula" to the Ocklawaha and St. Johns Navigation Company.

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<sup>34</sup>Florida Times Union, March 20, 1903.

<sup>35</sup>Hart Papers.

Four days later, the "Fearless" was sold to Ordway by R. H. Thompson.<sup>36</sup>

This manipulation apparently stabilized the financial situation, for two years later the "Hiawatha" was built.

The "Hiawatha" was the largest, and the last "Oklawaha Steamer." It boasted of ten staterooms on the main deck and eighteen on the upper deck which also featured a dining room and a saloon beneath the pilothouse. The vessel, built at East Palatka, was eighty-nine feet long, twenty-three feet wide and drew four and a half feet of water. It displaced one hundred and twenty-nine tons and was powered by steamboilers developing one hundred and twenty horsepower. The engines were manufactured by the Bockeye Foundry and Machine Shop of Keokuk, Iowa.<sup>37</sup>

The line included three vessels once again. Its efforts were concentrated on the Silver Springs run although service was provided up the St. Johns to Lake George as well. The "Astatula," "Hiawatha" and "Okeehumkee" were not all that busy however.

By 1912 the "Astatula," as noted, was through. That year also sounded the death knell for the Hart Line, for the Silver Springs Company, owned by C. Carmichael, launched the "City of Ocala," a double-decked vessel powered by an internal combustion engine. It was fast enough to make the trip between Palatka and Silver Springs during the day, making it possible

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Johnson's Steam Vessels . . . .

for the passenger to spend the night ashore in a more comfortable environment. The Hart Line countered with the "Billow," a twenty-eight year old iron-hulled vessel brought south from Boston. It appeared on the registration lists from 1915 to 1920, but what happened to it has not been determined.<sup>38</sup>

Carmichael secured control of the docks at Silver Springs, and by 1919 the Hart Line had called it quits. It was usurped as it had usurped.

The Thompson's last shot occurred during 1917 when the old "Okeechumkee" reappeared for the tourist season, but to no avail. The tourist trade diminished during the war. The "Hiawatha" hit a snag and punctured its hull during the 1918-19 season and although preparations to repair the vessel were made, nothing was done.

The Thompsons circulated the following:

NOTICE: OCKLAWAHA STEAMBOAT CO. (HART LINE)

Palatka, Florida; December 9, 1919

The scarcity of skilled shipyard help, due to the previous absorption by shipyards and industries far away, obliges this company to postpone its winter time schedule, till further notice by mail to all principal ticket agents.

R. W. Thompson  
General Manager

The Thopsens probably were glad; they deplored giving up the institution, but it wasn't that profitable, and the ruptured hull of the "Hiawatha" provided an excuse, however legitimate. There were drydocks under construction in East Palatka in 1919.



The "Billow," "Hiawatha" and "Okeehumkee" were registered through 1920, then all were dropped as operative. The "Billow" was probably sold; "Okeehumkee" was tied up, starboard side to, east of where the "Astatula" was on Hart Point, and the "Hiawatha" was pulled up on Dunham's marine railway at the boatyard there. The ways would accommodate only one vessel. The "Astatula" rotted and burned; the "Okeehumkee" was torn down as a hazard during the 1940's, and the "Hiawatha" maintained its position on the ways, fairly intact until the 1940's but a victim of rot, disuse and hurricanes.

### CHAPTER XIII. PROGRESS AND DESTRUCTION

Sometime during the winter of 1865 John Tenney stepped off the steamer "City Point" at Jacksonville. The town was in shambles; the Negroes were in dire straits and the few whites remaining were almost in the same situation. He bought a small sailboat and headed upriver. When he stopped at Mandarin he was told to guard the sail for his boat, or someone would steal it to make clothing.

The sawmill at Orange Mills had burned to the ground. The wharf had disappeared, and only two families were living in the area; those of F. S. Dancy and John B. Hazel. George Carter was living in Hastings; for years he'd hidden from the conscription agents of the Confederacy so he could remain to care for his fifteen or sixteen children.<sup>1</sup>

All that remained at Welaka were a few shells of what had once been cottages, a wharf and a warehouse inhabited by an Indian half-breed and his family.

Tenney stopped at the Du Pont landing where Dornelius Du Pont was waving a white flag. He wanted to sell out. Tenney bought the land and moved to Federal Point in March of 1866. (The name derived from surveyor's working in the area after Florida had been acquired from Spain.)

The valley residents began to return to their homes during

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<sup>1</sup>Tenney, p. 20.

the winter of 1865-66. Dr. R. G. Mays went home to Orange Mills to find his holdings destroyed by shells from the gunboats. In Palatka, Teasdale and Reid reopened for business in their brick store near the river. A delay in reopening the post office ensued because " . . . it was difficult to find anyone in Palatka to take the iron-clad oath of allegiance to the United States.<sup>2</sup> Ebenezer C. Hadlock was appointed to the position on November 3, 1865, but by May 2, 1866, he had been replaced by H. J. Bickford who had an even shorter tenure of office, for on June 27, Albert J. Dalton succeeded him. Dalton apparently stabilized things, for his term didn't expire until March 16, 1868.

The town itself reflected the neglect of four years of virtual inactivity. Tenney wrote that one street had " . . . grown up to dog fennel as high as a man's head."<sup>3</sup> As for the rest of Putnam County, " . . . practically there was none." Only a few " . . . isolated stock raisers . . ." inhabited the interior, these people having suffered tremendously during the war as most of their stock had been confiscated by Union troops.

The Reconstruction Era was characterized by " . . . mild military rule"; there was " . . . very little for the soldiers to do" because of no overt disturbances.<sup>4</sup> There was " . . . no animosity of feeling apparent" in the ex-Confederate soldiers who returned.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

Tenney observed:

It is not my province or intention to say what might have been, but simply to tell what I saw and knew. Knowing the Southern people as well as I did, I imagine I would not have reconstructed those states just as it was done, but I might have done worse. In the beginning, I would not have resorted to arms, and had as little influence at the beginning as I had at the ending.<sup>5</sup>

The lack of lawlessness of which Tenney spoke apparently pervaded the Putnam County area; during the years 1868-1871, Ku Klux Klan activities in neighboring counties resulted in a declaration of martial law. Putnam did not experience this however.<sup>6</sup>

There was a feeling of anti-Union and anti-Negro sentiment. The Judge Bronson home was sold by Mrs. Sophronia Bronson to Miss Charlotte Henry in 1866. When Miss Henry came to Palatka, she brought with her an invalid sister, Mary Mulholland, and a registered nurse to care for her. Miss Henry opened a school in the house for the children of the recently freed Negroes. The Federal government entrusted her with the dispensation of subsistence provisions to the needy as well. On Saturday nights, Mrs. White would hand them out, primarily to Negroes. Because of her demonstrations for equality, a certain ill feeling was directed towards her by the residents of Palatka and Washington had troops stationed on the property to protect her. She felt this was unnecessary however, and had the troops removed, primarily through the efforts of a Captain Gray.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>6</sup>Ralph L. Peck, "Lawlessness in Florida, 1868-1871," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXX No. 2 (October, 1961) p. 164.

<sup>7</sup>Letter from Miss Edelmira Rivero to author, January 4, 1967.

Mrs. White's efforts were observed by A. E. Kinne, a northerner who toured northeast Florida in 1866. He referred to her "Freedmen's School" in Palatka, which also had one white child in attendance.<sup>8</sup> Kinne also observed that lumbering was the chief activity in the middle valley, although things were just getting re-established for the first time since before the war.

Another attempt at fully emancipating the Negro occurred in April, 1867, when a Union League was formed. These organizations worked to improve the lot of the freedmen and encouraged them to participate actively in politics. Undoubtedly the Union League was instrumental in selecting some of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1868. Putnam County was part of the Fifteenth District, represented by A. Chandler, a Negro; J. H. Goss; E. D. House; and W. Rogers.<sup>9</sup>

Ledyard Bill toured Palatka in early 1869; writing in March, he noted that Palatka had a population of about five hundred, and that the town was sprawled along the river for a quarter of a mile. There were eight stores, two large hotels and two churches, the latter being "somewhat neglected."<sup>10</sup> Two steam-powered sawmills were operating. One of the hotels was the Putnam House, operated by A. E. Austin.<sup>11</sup> This was the

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<sup>8</sup>Joe M. Richardson (ed.), "A Northerner Reports on Florida, 1866," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XXXX No. 4 (April, 1962) p. 389.

<sup>9</sup>Davis, p. 494.

<sup>10</sup>Ledyard Bill, A Winter in Florida (New York: Wood and Holbrook, 1869) p. 109.

<sup>11</sup>Tbid., p. 110.

first reference to the Putnam House, but there was no reference as to when it was built.

The chief attraction was Hart's orange grove across the river, although it had been damaged by a severe frost earlier that winter.

Land adjacent to the river sold for from five to fifteen dollars per acre if unimproved, and from twenty to thirty dollars if improved, although the latter numbered only " . . . scarce a dozen, all told, from one end of the river to the other."<sup>12</sup>

The " . . . pioneer and leading spirits" of Palatka were, according to Bill, H. O. Woodruff, and the Reverend P. P. Bishop.

Life was hard; there was " . . . not a single, first class Milch cow in all Eastern Florida . . . ." and "good milk and butter is more or less a luxury. . . ." <sup>13</sup>

The Eastern Herald, a weekly newspaper, dated to March, 1869. Its motto, "In God is Our Trust," was determined by the editor and proprietor, George W. Pratt, otherwise referred to as "Alligator Pratt" because of his propensity to write articles related to the alligator population. The Herald was published on Wednesday evenings in Pratt's offices over Moragne's drug store and sold annually for three dollars, semi-annually for two dollars and quarterly for a dollar.

Pratt intended to use his paper as a guideline for the development of the area. In his April 7, 1869 issue, he stated

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 20ff.

his policy:

We cannot take too much agriculture, . . . it is very well for us to let politics alone, when they can do us no good, and devote ourselves to industrial pursuits, which can always do us good. This is particularly the case now with the South. Let us, therefore, turn to the cultivation of crops, the production of bread, and the development of our resources generally.

Editor Pratt thus declared his intention to accept the outcome of the Civil War and that to continue to debate the issue would be sheer folly, resulting in nothing good for the benefit of the community. He did not mean that he was not going to sit back and be apolitical; on the contrary. Pratt was willing to speak out publicly when he felt there was justifiable reason. Neither did he deny his paper to others who had an opinion to voice. This was just what Palatka, among other places, needed: a progressive public voice that was not afraid of any faction.

In an editorial in the same issue, Pratt declared, "Ignorance is the mother of crime and superstition. Knowledge is said to be power." He concluded the editorial with, "Palatka . . . needs a first-class school." He was right. Nearly one-third of the county residents were illiterate.

An early political controversy arose in April. An irate taxpayer was not satisfied with the county commission's dispensation of public funds. One of the commissioners stated the " . . . Board of County Commissioners have nothing to do with the county funds, except to order the payment of such bills as are required by law."

A "newcomer" responded to the commissioner in the April 3

edition of the Eastern Herald. From Dunn's Lake he wrote that he did " . . . not charge that you are ignorant. I assume you are too confident. You are trustees of the county business. Its funds are not exactly your funds. Publish them in the paper."

In an attempt to expand circulation and to inform the area in general, Pratt included references to communities in the outlying Palatka area. At Picolata was an old field, a wharf and a "stopping house." A grocery and small warehouse were also located there.

Bakersville was a community centered around Fort Baker which dated to the Seminole War period. Several families resided there, some four miles from the river on the St. Augustine Road. Adjacent to Bakersville was "Coxetta Land," where every other forty acres, of a ten thousand acre tract, was given to a settler from South Carolina who had been forced to come to Florida to escape the Civil War.

A shortage of money was pointed out by Pratt's statement directed to "our county friends." "If you have not the money (to pay for the paper), send us produce consigned to the care of any of our Commission Merchants."<sup>14</sup>

Attempts were made to circumvent the law as established by the Reconstruction agencies. An election was held without regard to the old city charter which had been surrendered at the close of the war. The officers elected later doubted the validity of the election and resolved not to organize the government "under the election," and recommended that reorganization be held in

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<sup>14</sup>Eastern Herald, April 3, 1869.



conjunction with Reconstruction regulations.

Pratt left no stone unturned in appealing to all with his paper; he published the names of arrivals at the St. Johns Hotel. They came from as far away as New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Vermont.

A column titled "Marine Activity" also was included in the paper. Vessels serving Palatka were the "City Point," "Carlington," "Dictator," "Hattie," "Meta," "Nick King" and "Ocklawaha." They connected Palatka with Charleston, Dunn's Lake, Enterprise, Griffin, Jacksonville, Okahumka, Rice Creek, Savannah and Silver Springs.

The Hart Line was operating two vessels: the "Griffin," skippered by Captain D. A. Dunham; and the "Ocklawaha," commanded by Captain R. J. Adams. These steamers made weekly trips to Lake Griffin, Eustis, Harris, Dunham and Silver Springs. One craft would leave Palatka every Thursday night after the "Dictator" arrived from Jacksonville. The boat reached Silver Springs on Friday night, and Leesburg and Okahumka on Sunday morning. Okahumka was the final destination. The return trip began at Okahumka at noon on Sunday and terminated at Palatka Wednesday just before the steamer bound for Charleston and Savannah departed.

Agents for the Hart Line were McCants, Rogero and Company, who also served as agents for the following steamers: "City Point," "Dictator," "Griffin" and "Hattie."

There was a reorganization of officers at St. Mark's Church. Doctor George E. Hawes was the new Senior Warden; James

TABLE 15

 REPRESENTATIVE FREIGHT RATES<sup>a</sup>  
 Palatka to Silver Springs

One barrel of flour or rice . . . . .	\$ .50
A sack of salt or coffee . . . . .	.50
A keg of nails, lard or butter . . . . .	.25
A small package . . . . .	.25
Cabin passage, including meals . . . . .	5.00

TABLE 16

 PALATKA EXPORTS<sup>a</sup>  
 September 1, 1868 to March 28, 1869

Cotton . . . . .	2,181 bales
Hides . . . . .	1,199 bales
Hides (loose) . . . . .	1,083
Moss . . . . .	195 bales
Peas . . . . .	120 sacks
Wool . . . . .	17 bales

TABLE 17

PALATKA PRICES, 1869<sup>a</sup>

Bacon . . . . .	.18-.20 pound
Potatos . . . . .	\$5.00-9.00 barrel
Rum . . . . .	\$4.50 gallon
Salt . . . . .	\$2.00-3.50 per sack
Whiskey . . . . .	\$2.00 per gallon

<sup>a</sup>Eastern Herald, March 17, 1869.

Burt served as Junior Warden; and Vestrymen were H. L. Hart and Charles Stebbins, who also served as organist.

The Palatka Cemetery Committee was composed of D. H. Campbell, S. J. Kennerly, and Charles H. Stebbins. The committee was responsible for the four hundred square foot area which was bounded by a five foot fence and had double gates eight feet wide on each side.

Pratt demonstrated his humor by printing some quips; one had to do with the cemetery. According to Mr. Pratt, dead reckoning consisted of calculating one's funeral expenses. On the lighter side, he offered, "The young lady who was lost in thought has been found. She was hugging an idea and it looked like a man."

On May 8, 1869, one company went out of business. The firm of McCants, Rogero and Company was purchased by H. L. Hart. Hart was emerging as the great economic power in the Palatka area.<sup>15</sup>

The foundation was laid once again. Men such as Burt, Hart, Kennerly, Moragne, Pratt and Teasdale would play an increasingly important role in Palatka's affairs in the years to come.

As the Civil War faded, more people began to be attracted to the Putnam County area. Palatka was not the only real center of population for the county. The state, during Reconstruction, was divided into Military Districts which centered on a fairly substantial concentration of people. Putnam County was composed

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<sup>15</sup>Eastern Herald, June 2, 1869.

or at least parts of three such districts; one centered in Palatka, one in Orange Springs and a third was composed of the area around Welaka. According to the 1870 census, the Palatka district included eleven hundred and twenty people. There were three hundred and forty-nine in the Orange Springs district, while the Welaka district had six hundred and thirty-seven residents.<sup>16</sup>

TABLE 18

PALATKA MERCHANTS, 1869<sup>a</sup>


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P. W. Ansley	Watchmaker
B. M. Baer	Dry goods, Grocery
Archibald T. Banks	Attorney at Law
C. P. Devereaux	Agent, Dry goods, Grocery
H. H. Forward	Dry goods
William Ivers	Ice
A. W. Mann	Bakery
Joseph Mann	Groceries, Fine Liquors, Tobaccos and Dry goods
McCants, Rogero and Co.	Furniture and Dry goods
N. H. Moragne and Co.	Drugs
P. and H. Petermann	Grocery, Clothing, Crockery, Cutlery
P. and H. Petermann	St. Johns Hotel
W. C. Snow	Grocery, Wines, Postmaster
J. R. Stafford	Palatka Tin Shop
Teasdale and Reid	Dry goods
A. O. Wright	Attorney at Law, Real Estate

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<sup>a</sup>Eastern Herald, March 17, 1869.

The population of Palatka proper was seven hundred and twenty, an increase of one hundred and seven since 1860. Three hundred and fifty-nine of these were white, but there continued to be a Negro majority of two; three hundred and sixty-one Negroes resided within the limits of the town. Palatka was

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<sup>16</sup>U. S., Ninth Census . . . . , Vol. I, p. 98.

still the largest concentration of inhabitants in the county.<sup>17</sup>

Putnam County's population totalled three thousand seven hundred and thirty-four residents, thirteen hundred and sixteen of whom could not write. Of these, five hundred and one were white. Eleven hundred and seventy-five of those aged ten years and over couldn't read. There were only three hundred and fifty-nine individuals in school: one hundred and thirty-nine white males; one hundred and thirty-one white females; fifty-five colored males; and thirty-four colored females.<sup>18</sup>

The composition of the population of the county was overwhelmingly Southern; all but two hundred and one persons were born in either Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia or West Virginia. A total of nineteen hundred and sixteen people were native Floridians. South Carolinians numbered the next highest with eight hundred and fifty-five; five hundred and eighteen came from Georgia; one hundred and forty-two from North Carolina; eighty-four from Alabama; and twenty-eight from Virginia and West Virginia combined.

Seventy-seven of the two hundred and one miscellaneous individuals were foreign-born. The Northwestern European white, always considered to be of superior stock, predominated. The low number of foreign-born reflects the general pattern of immigration to the United States; the vast majority preferred to settle in other than the Southern States. Twenty of Palatka's foreign-born came from England and Wales; twenty from Scotland;

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 349.

seventeen from Germany; seven from Cuba; five from Africa; three from France; and two from British America (Canada).<sup>19</sup>

These figures did not include transients such as tourists or others in the area for health reasons. The attraction of Florida as a winter haven for invalids was increasing. This resulted in the building, primarily after the Civil War, of a number of hotels in Palatka. Little other than the natural beauty of the area offered a real recreation attraction however, until later in the decade.

Doctor D. L. Houston wrote J. D. Davidson from Palatka on March 19, 1874, mentioning four hotel-type establishments, one of which, the St. Johns, had been operative since the 1850's. The Eggleston House, according to Doctor Houston, "had a bad name."<sup>20</sup> The Putnam House and the Underwood House were the remaining two. All were filled.

The doctor strolled about the town after a good night's rest. On First Street West he ". . . struck south, and presently came to a magnificent live oak grove, interspersed with Magnolias, one of which is one hundred feet high, and all hung with superb moss."<sup>21</sup>

Other observations by Doctor Houston were that oranges were selling for four cents each, although Hart was selling his for six. He observed that all governmental offices were held by carpet-baggers. Taxes were "very high" but no evidence of

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 349.

<sup>20</sup>Uncataloged Manuscript Collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville, Florida.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

public improvement existed. The courthouse, ". . . once a fine house of frame construction, stands in the common without a fence, and is ready to fall to pieces for want of paint. The Hotels are all northern property. They prosper."<sup>22</sup>

A travel service operated by an individual who signed all his works "Rambler," commented on the Palatka tourist area in 1875. The St. Johns Hotel and the Putnam House were referred to as being "excellent hotels." The Putnam House had been expanded in 1875 by the addition of forty rooms. James Burt was selling real estate in the area, and a druggist, J. H. Moragne, had a store on Lemon Street. Moragne didn't confine his activities to pharmaceutical pursuits exclusively however. He later (1869) was president of the South Inland Navigation and Improvement Company, with an office in Jacksonville and Palatka.<sup>23</sup>

On the river, Captain Jacob Brock operated three steamers on regularly scheduled runs between Palatka, Enterprise and Mellonville. The steamers were the "Darlington," the "Florence" and the "Hattie." He had competition from Captain L. M. Coxetter who operated the "Starlight."<sup>24</sup>

Mrs. Sophronia Bronson died in 1875. She left two widowed daughters, Gertrude and Anna Hoffman. The daughters later released to Charlotte and Nathaniel White, by quit claim deed, the Judge's burial plot, a fifteen by fifteen foot area near the

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Eastern Herald, April 7, 1869.

<sup>24</sup>Guide to Florida--Rambler (New York: American News Company, 1875) Appendix.

entrance to the property. His coffin was removed to the cemetery.<sup>25</sup>

Pratt continued to publish the Eastern Herald in 1875. In the September 4 issue, S. J. Kennerly provided him with the prices of various articles in Palatka. Generally, they were lower than they had been in 1869.

TABLE 19  
PALATKA PRICES, 1875<sup>a</sup>

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Bacon	12¢ per pound
Chewing tobacco	60¢-70¢ per pound
Corn	\$1.25 per bushel
Deerskin	30¢ per pound
Lard	\$1.25 per gallon
Smoking tobacco	\$2.70-80¢ per pound
Whiskey	\$1.50-\$2.75 per gallon

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<sup>a</sup>Eastern Herald, September 4, 1875.

Pratt referring to the "Heights," commented, "Salubrity is the word. Above the river flats, you breathe air again." H. L. Hart was laying out streets and lots in the Heights while his "Ocklawaha" was undergoing maintenance under the direction of Captain Denham.<sup>26</sup>

Pratt satirized again in September. After much controversy, the residents apparently decided they didn't need a city council (a Utopia?) and Pratt stated:

(the) . . . place is all growing up in weeds. Crime and drunkenness are constantly being committed . . . and the streets are noisy and fussy. No lady can pass along the

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<sup>25</sup>Letter from Miss Edelmire Rivero to author.

<sup>26</sup>Eastern Herald, September 4, 1875.



sidewalk without hearing dreadful oaths or being nearly ran (sic) over by lazy loafing negroes whose principal business seems to be to stand right in everybodys way and slapping off each others hats . . . . Horses, hogs, cows, dogs and everything else are allowed to run at perfect liberty.

The great trouble is that there are a few leading men in the place who know that if there is a council and the laws are enforced that they will lose a few dollars by it; therefore they club together and oppose it.

The few colored men, with Harry Jones at their head, running for government is simply ridiculous because people know government is radical, they staid away from the polls and let it die.<sup>27</sup>

Editor Pratt let his hair down and spoke his opinion.

Obviously he scorned the public attitude, and demonstrated that he was not afraid of possible sanctions against him by the "clubs."

He made one of his first references in living up to his nickname in the same issue, relating that the steamer "Pansofkee" had been condemned. This, he said, would be "sad news" to Commodore Root and the Alligator Brigade.

The Carleton House opened in October; it was owned by Andrew Shalley and had twenty-five rooms. The Palatka Academy was established on November 1 under the direction of Professor Wood, finally bringing to reality Pratt's desire for an educational facility in Palatka.<sup>28</sup> Wood had eighteen years of teaching experience and there were forty pupils enrolled in his classes during the first week in November.

Pratt championed the cause of the Rice Creek area. It was navigable for nine miles, all the way to the old English

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<sup>27</sup>Eastern Herald, September 18, 1875.

<sup>28</sup>Eastern Herald, October 30, 1875.

rice fields. Three miles from its mouth was Etonish Creek, flowing out of the Etonish Scrub. This was only twenty miles from Palatka; "Why was there not more settlement in the area?" the editor queried.

The Putnam House was completely renovated during November. Perhaps competition instigated this, as the Carleton House may have appealed to the tourists because it was new.

A controversy existed relative to just how the name of the town was to be spelled as late as 1875. The difference of opinion centered on whether "Palatka" or "Pilatka" was the correct usage.<sup>29</sup> On May 24, 1875, the post office officially adopted "Palatka" as the proper spelling.

The year 1877 closed with a bang when Pratt reported that on December 26, all the prisoners in the jail escaped. Someone apparently passed a "crowbar or hatchet" through the window, for a hole had been cut in the iron floor. "Up to date nothing has been learned as to their whereabouts."<sup>30</sup>

Editor Pratt must have been successful in getting a semblance of government restored to Palatka. He reported on January 19, "The Mayor's Court seems to be doing a lively business." At any rate, one street at least was not growing up in weeds. Lemon, probably for the first time, was graded all the way to Newton (approximately where Eleventh intersects it today) during January, 1878. "Soon Newton will be inseparably

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<sup>29</sup>Lanier, p. 127.

<sup>30</sup>Eastern Herald, January 5, 1878.

united to Palatka," said Pratt.<sup>31</sup> Hubbard Hart was contracted to fill Lemon Street at Newton, and P. and H. Petermann filled the hole in the street just south of Willow Pond. This made Lemon Street level for nearly three-quarters of a mile from the river.<sup>32</sup>

Another item relating to transportation referred to the completion of a bridge across Rice Creek, " . . . the importance of which is already apparent" because Isiah Williams was sending produce to Palatka for shipment out of the valley. Credit Editor Pratt once more. Also in regard to Rice Creek was a reference to the area between the headwaters of the stream and the Oklawaha as being " . . . the great bear region of Putnam County."<sup>33</sup>

More schools, using the term loosely, were established. One hundred students, seven of whom were Negro, attended thirty-three schools in the county.<sup>34</sup> Three muns established, in 1876, the Academy of the Sacred Heart, moving to permanent quarters at Dodge and Emmett Streets in 1878.<sup>35</sup>

Williams' use of the new bridge encouraged Pratt to write that another bridge should be built, this one across Orange Creek. It would " . . . funnel much produce into

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., January 19, 1878.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Health Resorts of the South, Manuscript collection, University of Florida Library, Gainesville.

Palatka."<sup>36</sup> Much of this would come from Iola, some fifteen hours up the Oklawaha from Palatka. The place was a shipping point for cotton during the Civil War, but was now planted extensively in orange groves near the lake of the same name. Mrs. D. L. White owned considerable property in the area and had a warehouse there as well. Other attractions include fishing and hunting.

There was reference to Welaka in the Eastern Herald for February 9, 1878. About 1852 a thriving little community flourished there, but a period of inactivity followed and there was " . . . nothing left to mark the site of that beautiful town but the decaying wharf." Mr. Broad, a merchant at Welaka, was attempting to revive the community. Pratt, the champion of progress, wished him luck.

The Willow Pond project went beyond the filling in of part of it to level Lemon Street. It was drained in early 1878 and soon would " . . . find use as a park." The land had been donated "years ago" for that specific purpose.<sup>37</sup>

A fright was thrown into the town in February; a "large panther" had been seen near the grove of Judge Thompson. Pratt commented, "When a panther can stalk within one mile of the city, it is time the police take action."<sup>38</sup> It was shot a week later in the swamp of Whitewater Creek near the place that Levy Williams had seen it on Thompson's property.

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<sup>36</sup>Eastern Herald, January 26, 1878.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., February 16, 1878.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

The principle members of the town in early 1878 were Mayor Joseph H. Mann and J. F. Santana, who served as marshal. Five churches existed: the Baptist; Presbyterian, E. R. Briggs, minister; the Roman Catholic Church, Farther Felix Ghione; St. James Methodist Church South, F. M. Hauser, pastor; and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Reverend R. T. Roche, pastor. New businesses included A. J. Beach and Son, who had nurseries at Rollestown; A. J. Hedrick, insurance; E. C. Parkhurst, dry goods and hardware; the Palatka Barber Shop; Philips and Philips Jewelry; and John S. Taylor, a shipping agent.<sup>39</sup>

Rice Creek crept back into Pratt's columns as he noted that the place was one of "considerable resort," probably to his great satisfaction. On Sundays especially, there were boats filled with pleasure seekers observing the "wild looking place," similiar to the Oklawaha. In the dense swamps adjacent to the stream were huge alligators and other animals.<sup>40</sup>

Sometime in early 1878, Hart sold the Putnam House to W. H. Orvis, ". . . the most popular Hotel man in Florida."<sup>41</sup> The tourist season slacked off somewhat compared to the previous year; the hotels were not filled, but they were busy. Palatka's hotels, the best of which was the Larkin House, could accommodate two hundred and fifty people and by March 23, they were all overflowing.

Much activity occurred on the river. Pratt mentioned

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., February 22, 1878.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., March 2, 1878.

that the wharf, which extended " . . . the whole length of the business waterfront" would accommodate as many as twelve steamboats at a time.

Hart maintained a stable which continued to operate in conjunction with the Putnam House. He had "two fine coaches" and charge of the following rates: a double carriage with a driver cost two dollars for the first hour, and one dollar for each additional hour; a single horse and buggy rented for a dollar an hour, the same fee as for a horse and saddle; hiring a double carriage to Palatka Heights cost two dollars, and to Brown's Landing, three dollars.<sup>42</sup> A riding school for boys and girls was located at the Hart Livery Stables; J. Ramsaur operated the school.

Pratt advised that Commodore Root, the local big game hunter, had tracked the mate of the panther killed near Thompson's grove to its den in Whitewater Swamp. He said to " . . . look out for another sensation in Thompson's Heights." A large animal, not a panther, was reported the following week and children were warned to keep out of the area. Root was busy organizing a drive to locate the animal, and Thompson advised " . . . prudence is the better part of valor" and people should remain away from his grove.<sup>43</sup>

The tedium of Palatka prompted Pratt to write on March 16 that Colonel Hart's coaches were doing a fine business; that the longest alligators were to be found in Rice Creek; that

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., March 9, 1878.

all the hotels were filled; that the most intelligent tourists in Florida chose Palatka as their favorite resort; but, "Why don't somebody get up an excitement?"<sup>44</sup>

Pratt waxed eloquent in March:

For beauty, intelligence, elegance, and magnificence of dress, the northern ladies sojourning in Palatka, this season, rivals [sic] all other persons on the St. Johns River. The gentlemen look well enough, but some of them are awfully ugly. However as an offset to this, intellect supplies the deficiency. So that after all an intellectual man cannot be but attractive.<sup>45</sup>

Alligator Pratt:

A few more days of warm weather will bring the saurians to the surface. Then you may listen to the roar of the alligator, which sound can hardly be distinguished from the roar of an African Lion.<sup>46</sup>

He very likely represented the sentiments of some of the people in Palatka when he said that there was word going around that a railway was to be constructed from Palatka to Orange Lake. His observation: "We need a railroad to go somewhere, and we don't care much where it goes so that it starts from Palatka."<sup>47</sup>

As a result of the March elections, the following officers of Palatka were installed: the mayor was Henry R. Teasdale; aldermen included Richard J. Adams, James Burt, Calvin Gillis, J. H. Mann and Calvin M. Smith; William F. Forward was clerk and assessor; the treasurer was Henry F. Peterman, Jr.; and Andrew Shalley served as marshal.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., March 16, 1878.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., March 23, 1878.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., March 16, 1878.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1878.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., April 6, 1878.

One of Mayor Teasdale's first acts was to introduce the chain gang to Palatka.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps not until September however, was anyone in a position to practice the newly created institution; on September 24, the Eastern Herald reported, "Two culled gemmen favored with a ball and chain are now engaged in divesting the streets of a super abundance of coffee weeds, old shoes and other easily dispensed with ornaments of our attractive city."<sup>50</sup>

Alligator Pratt: Commodore Root shot a twelve foot alligator while hunting up the Oklawaha; he said there were as many as there were five years ago. But even namesake could finally demand too much, "Forbiding sic the firing of guns within the corporation is a good law, but when twenty or thirty Alligators stick their heads up and bellow right in front of the town, it makes a fellow feel like paying a V, just to get a shot at them."<sup>51</sup>

On May 1, John S. Taylor, agent for the Warren Ray's Line, announced the inauguration of direct transportation by schooner between Palatka and New York.<sup>52</sup> Whether or not this culminated in reality was questionable, especially when one considered the following week's article stating that the steamer "Hampton" fired a parting shot when it left Palatka; it was that vessel's

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., April 13, 1878.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., September 21, 1878.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., August 10, 1878.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., April 6, 1878.



final trap for the season.<sup>53</sup>

The Mayor's Court was busy in May. Amelia Ann Moseley was fined one dollar " . . . for raising her too tuneful voice a couple of notes higher than a whisper, and in other ways disturbing the peaceful quiet of our quiet community."<sup>54</sup> Hagar Simmons, aged forty, was jailed for keeping a "disorderly house," but she broke out of jail in two hours, " . . . and whither her nimble hoofs have transported her sable and nymph-like form is a mystery. The Putnam County jail needs repairing."<sup>55</sup>

A hurricane struck Palatka on September 8, 1878. The citrus crop was seriously damaged and the harvest was the lowest in ten years. The bridge across Rice Creek was destroyed.<sup>56</sup>

Palatka's population doubled from 1870 to 1880. The census for the latter year indicated one thousand six hundred and sixteen residents for the city.<sup>57</sup> The county population increased to six thousand, two hundred and sixty-one,<sup>58</sup> twenty-four hundred and sixteen of whom were Negroes.<sup>59</sup>

There were two hundred and thirty-one foreign-born individuals in the county: eighty-seven came from Britain; forty-two

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., September 21, 1878.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., May 25, 1878.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., September 21, 1878.

<sup>57</sup>U. S., Bureau of the Census, Tenth Census of the United States: 1880. Population, VI (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1883) p. 119.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 385.

from Germany; thirty-two from Ireland; and nineteen from Canada. All the remaining foreign-born were from Northwest Europe except for eight from the West Indies.<sup>60</sup>

Of the six thousand and thirty remaining Putnam residents, three thousand six hundred and thirty were native-born Floridians. Several states were original homes for the majority of the rest: ex-South Carolinians numbered seven hundred and sixteen; Georgians, six hundred and sixteen; two hundred and forty-three were from New York; and there were one hundred and forty-three and one hundred from North Carolina and Virginia respectively.<sup>61</sup>

The population composition of Palatka and Putnam continued to be very homogeneous, except for the New York element which provided the predominantly southern majority with some different ideas. There were also eighty-one people from Massachusetts and thirty-eight from Pennsylvania.<sup>62</sup> Some accounts gave these northerners the credit for building Palatka;<sup>63</sup> Hubbard Hart, for example, was initially from Vermont.

The doubling of the population was the greatest single increase recorded during Palatka's history. The chief attractions were the lumber industry, although nearly all the timber cut was exported without any value added by processing it locally, and agriculture, especially an expanding citrus industry.

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 501.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Florida for Invalids, Tourists and Settlers (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964) p. 114.

The first railroad to serve Palatka was the Gainesville, Ocala and Charlotte Harbor Railway, Incorporated, which had a branch from Palatka intersecting the main route from Gainesville to Lake City. In 1881 construction began on the line from Palatka to Gainesville. One hundred and fifty men were employed in laying the roadbed, which, under the direction of General Varnum, was advancing at the rate of three-quarters of a mile per day. The completion date was May 1, 1881. On March 24, 1881, the steamer "Oyster Bay" towed a schooner into Palatka, arriving at noon, with the first shipment of track for the road which now was known as the Florida Southern Railroad. Two boxcars and ten flatcars were eventually brought to Palatka for work on the branch, the first part of the Florida Southern to be constructed.<sup>64</sup>

The town council got into the railroad business for the first time in 1880 when it granted a right of way to the Gainesville, Ocala and Charlotte Harbor Railroad. Included in the ordinance, passed over the mayor's veto, was a bond issue for \$10,000.00 to construct a five hundred foot wharf extending from Main Street into the river to accommodate the line. The ordinance passed on May 13, 1880.

A referendum was held on June 5 to determine the voters' approval of the bond issue. It passed. The bonds were to expire in twenty years at eight per cent interest annually.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Pettengill, p. 69.

<sup>65</sup>Walter M. Davis, Ordinances of the City of Palatka, Florida (Jacksonville, Florida: Vance Printing Company, 1895) p. 110.

Apparently the project fell through however, for another right of way was given the same road on January 6, 1882, running from the mill area at the foot of Laurel Street to Main Street.<sup>66</sup>

On June 9, 1881, the Florida Southern began erecting a machine and car shop, thirty-two by eighty feet in area, at Palatka.

F.N. Marvick had the contract to raise the structure. Soon, twenty-seven cars were under construction, twenty of which were boxcars and flatcars with a capacity of fifteen tons each. Plans for a turntable had to be revised because the land was so low that the pit that was excavated filled with water, and a new table, above ground, was built.

By July 12, the road had pushed thirty miles to the west of Palatka, considerably slower than initially estimated, and not until October 16 was the first schedule printed. Trains left Palatka at 7:35 a.m., arriving in Gainesville at 11:00 a.m., stopping at Francis, Brittain, McWilliams, Blue Pond, John, Tarver and finally Gainesville. A return trip left Gainesville at 2:30 p.m. and arrived in Palatka at 5:35 p.m.

The cost of the Palatka to Gainesville branch was \$328,578.85, or \$26,000.00 per mile.<sup>67</sup>

The Florida Southern purchased five locomotives in its early years of operation; one, Number Twenty, was called "Palatka." It was ordered in 1885 and delivered in 1886 by the Brooks and Rhode Island Locomotive Company. The shop number for the engine was 1088. It was a narrow gauge train measuring three

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>67</sup>Pettengill, p. 70.

feet between the wheels.<sup>68</sup> Other locomotives of Florida Southern included: Number Eight, the "Sherman Conant"; Number Eighteen, "Fanny T. Perry"; Nineteen was labelled "John R. Brewer"; and "Ocala" carried Number Twenty-One.<sup>69</sup>

The next railroad to enter Palatka was the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West. The original charter for the road was issued to the Tampa, Peace Creek and St. Johns River Railway in 1879, running from Jacksonville to Tampa. In 1881 the charter was obtained by the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West which was incorporated on June 27, 1881, with \$2,000,000.00 in capital. The road was granted 1,474,129 acres of land during the hey day of Florida railroading under the administration of Governor John D. Bloxham.<sup>70</sup> The purpose of the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West was to ". . . provide faster service than the steamboats along the St. Johns River."<sup>71</sup> It was granted a right of way by the town council on September 5, 1883, extending from the mill area along Rose to Main Street, then put to the city limits.<sup>72</sup>

This road, of standard five foot gauge, reached Palatka on March 6, 1884, when the first train, engineer Daniel Preston, arrived from Jacksonville. The line had four locomotives, two baggage cars, thirty boxcars, six coaches and thirty flatcars. An extension to Sanford pushed south the following year on the

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 85.

right of way initially obtained by the Palatka and Indian River Railway Company. It crossed the river at Buffalo Bluff and again at Lake Monroe.<sup>73</sup>

The railroads were taking the initial steps in usurping the hegemony on transportation from the steamboat companies. In addition to the Hart Line, there was other formidable opposition; the De Bary Line, the largest on the river had five vessels. This line held the mail contract in 1882 and served the valley with the "Fred De Bary," "George M. Bird," "Rosa," "Florence" and "Sylvan Glen." Another company was the Pioneer Line with four steamers: "Arrow," "Volusia," "Fox" and "Daylight." The latter two boats operated above Sanford. Independants were Captain Rhodes who skippered the "City of Sanford" and the "Wekiwa," Captain Jones. A typical fare was ten dollars round trip from Jacksonville to Sanford on the De Bary Line.

By 1883, Palatka had pushed west from the river for about a mile. As this progress developed, the attraction of living on the bluff appealed to more and more people. It has been noted that among Hart's many enterprises, he was involved in laying out lots and streets on what was incorporated on July 23, 1886 as Palatka Heights. James Burt was also one of the speculators interested in the Heights. He has been credited with surveying the area.<sup>74 & 75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>74</sup>Palatka Times Herald, May 14, 1953.

<sup>75</sup>Author's Note: The transit used by Judge Burt to survey the area was presented by his heirs to the City of Palatka which has placed it in the public library.

the fire were the "Marion" and "Wisteria," among others.

Preparations to remove valuable property commenced; all the stock on the pier was moved back to safety and the mail was taken from the post office. Temporary quarters were later established in the Warren Printing Office on Reid Street.

The flames then jumped Water Street and attacked Griffin's block and the Kennerly Building. The crew of the "Chattahoochee" was successful in preventing the latter from being consumed, but the former was lost.<sup>80</sup>

Suddenly both sides of Lemon Street were ablaze, and Moragne's store ignited; the fire intensified and jumped across Front Street to the Putnam House which was completely destroyed, including the recent addition to the building.<sup>81</sup>

Both sides of Front Street were blazing, and everything all the way to Reid Street was in flames. Reid served as a barrier because there was not enough fuel to attract the flames; Colonel Hart's property was directly across the street, and the corner of Reid and Front Streets was vacant because of the recent demolition of the old Smith building.<sup>82</sup>

To the south, on the corner of Lemon and Front Streets, a brick building owned by Fry offered another point of resistance. Great efforts in saving Murray's store prevented the flames from progressing any further to the west and protected the block

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<sup>80</sup>Manuscript Collection, Health Resorts . . . , p. 85.

<sup>81</sup>Palatka Weekly News, November 15, 1884.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

Disaster struck Palatka in the form of fire for the second time on the night of November 7, 1884. Flames were seen to be bursting through the roof of a warehouse, formerly the office of the defunct Putnam County Journal, then used by Devereaux, Rogero and Son as a storeroom for "oils and spirits."<sup>76</sup>

The firemen turned out immediately and attempted to confine the blaze under the direction of Fire Chief Mann and George Zehnbaur, the engine operator. The fire engine was started, but for some unexplained reason it refused to pump water through the hoses.

When the firemen broke open the warehouse they were confronted by a flaming holocaust that threatened to explode.

Then the engine began to act, but too late. Bravely the nozzle-men poured a full stream at short range. But a fierce wind drove the high flames across the intervening space, and the main building occupied by Devereaux, Rogero and Son caught. Then the blaze leaped across Lemon Street and attacked Graham's Hotel while explosion after explosion from the stores. sic<sup>77</sup>

Captain Ben Deal and a man named McLarty were blown over bales of goods by exploding barrels of kerosene while attempting to remove some goods from a warehouse.<sup>78</sup>

It was readily determined that this situation could only become more serious, and a call for assistance was issued. Captain Fitzgerald brought his steamer "Chattahoochee" close to the blaze and began pumping water from the river.<sup>79</sup> Other steamers fighting

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<sup>76</sup>Manuscript Collection, Health Resorts . . . , p. 84.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Palatka Weekly News, November 15, 1884.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.



south of Lemon and west of Front Streets.

In the area bounded by the river on the east, Reid Street on the north, Front Street on the west and the Presbyterian Church on the south, everything was destroyed except the furniture store of B.L. Lilienthal. "A person could stand at Fry's Corner yesterday and count twenty-five safes lying in the ashes."<sup>83</sup>

After the fire, which was widely publicized in the eastern United States, a rumor began to circulate that the fire was the work of an arsonist; a Negro arsonist, who was striking back at the white domination of the South, reputedly perpetrated the disaster.

The New York Herald on November 9, 1884, reported that a telegram had been received from Palatka which stated that the city had been set afire by Negroes and a "race war" had started. The Gen City Guards were reported to have been called to arms by the mayor and it was expected that a massacre was imminent.<sup>84</sup>

The citizenry of Palatka were shocked. They assembled almost immediately so as to draw up a complete refutation of the Herald's story. Other papers received the anonymous telegram as well.

The denial read, in part: "In this season of difficulty some anonymous hand sowed slanders throughout the country which injured the community more than the fire."<sup>85</sup> The gist of the refutation denied charges that there was" . . . apprehension of a negro

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Manuscript Collection, Health Resorts . . . , p. 86.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

uprising" in the town; there were no guests in the Hotel Palatka, and no Negress had ". . . tossed her baby from a window"; no one was seriously injured; "no bands of negroes marched through the streets with guns on their shoulders"; there was ". . . no proof of incendiarism"; "no riot was imminent"; "the riot was confined to a single case of assault and battery"; "no scrimmage was the outcome"; "the negroes did not threaten to burn the rest of the town."<sup>86</sup>

An editorial entitled "Palatka Slandered" accompanied the Palatka Weekly News for November 15, 1884. It read:

We have already denounced as false the telegram published in leading journals of New York stating that there was trouble between the whites and blacks in Palatka on the night of the fire, that the negroes paraded the streets in armed bands, rejoiced at the spread of the flames, and were suspected of having set fire to the town.

The election of 1884 added to the controversy; the Palatka Weekly News rejoiced at the victory of Cleveland over Blaine. It read, the ". . . election of Grover Cleveland is a blessing to every other citizen. Four years of Cleveland will bury the bloody shirt so deep that not even the Tribune can bring about its resurrection."<sup>87</sup> (The Tribune attributed the fire to a general dissatisfaction with the Democratic Party on the part of the Negro.)

The editor of the Palatka Daily News obviously did not reflect the political sentiment of Palatka in that election. He reported in the same issue the precinct returns for Putnam County. Palatka, precinct number eight (of eleven precincts,) voted for James G. Blaine.

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<sup>86</sup>Palatka Weekly News, November 15, 1884.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

The margin of victory was four hundred and twenty-seven to three hundred and fifty-seven for Grover Cleveland. Putnam County voted one thousand and seventy-one for Blaine to eight hundred and sixty-three for Cleveland.

Whatever this implied, the New York papers, even if practicing a little sensationalism, certainly sparked a good deal of discussion in Palatka. The Palatka Daily News denounced the "defamer of his people" as did the Jacksonville press. One thing was certain; the telegram had been sent.<sup>88</sup>

The city council met immediately after the fire and passed a resolution which defined an area in the business districts within which the mayor could order the removal of all wooden buildings.<sup>89</sup>

On November 24, ground was broken for the Kean Building at the corner of Lemon and Front Streets, the first of many new buildings to be constructed of brick after the fire.<sup>90</sup> Construction of the Putnam House did not begin until May 1, 1885; it reopened for business on January 26, 1886.<sup>91 & 92</sup> W.C. Snow, the grocer and postmaster, rebuilt in brick on Front Street. So did the First National Bank. By 1886, "Palatka was a brick city."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>Manuscript Collection, Health Resorts . . . , p. 86.

<sup>89</sup>It is interesting to reflect on the extent of the powers we in a "democracy" will give to an individual during a crisis.

<sup>90</sup>Manuscript Collection, Health Resorts . . . , p. 86.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 87.

<sup>92</sup>The Putnam was a wooden frame structure, either out of the area defined as accommodating only brick buildings or an exception to the resolution as a result of political pressure having been exerted on the mayor.

Hart tied up his "Osceola" and used it for an office space, shared by W.C. Hargrove, while his new brick building was being erected just south of the foot of Lemon between Water Street and the river.<sup>94</sup>

The total loss in the fire was estimated to be in excess of \$800,000.00.<sup>95</sup>

Sometimes disasters have their advantages. Economic Palatka, prior to the night of November 7, 1884, was nothing more than a hodgepodge of tumble-down wooden frame buildings which had for the most part been neglected both in the sense of maintenance and the dereliction of proper storage of flammable materials.

The fire rectified an ugly and unsafe situation. From this time dated the re-birth of the town based on the adoption of a semblance of a building code, a more sophisticated street system and allowance for a greater sense of permanence and contemporary architecture in the re-construction of the town.

The name of Captain William Moseley Husson commanded a great deal of respect in Palatka after the fire. He came to Palatka in 1880 to oversee his family interests. Husson was the grandson of William D. Moseley. His title dated to the Civil War when he served Company "D" of the First Florida Volunteers of Infantry. He designed many of the buildings erected after the fire, and he

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<sup>93</sup>Manuscript Collection, Health Resorts . . . , p. 87.

<sup>94</sup>Palatka Weekly News, November 15, 1884.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

also was the organizer of the Gem City Guards which elected him captain. He left Palatka in 1890, but in 1898 when the Guards were mustered into active duty, he returned to accept the captaincy of Company "D".<sup>96</sup>

The detrimental effects of the fire included the loss of the tourist industry to a certain extent. Tourists did travel to Palatka in the winter of 1884-85 only to discover there were no accommodations for them. As a result they sought other areas. Actually, the railroad killed Palatka's tourist trade in the long run. As the rail system pushed further south to more temperate climes, Palatka lost its attraction as a resort.

The zeal with which the residents rebuilt the town has also been overemphasized. Not for over a year later was the business district the important center it had been. The rebuilding of the nucleus of the town in a year was no insignificant achievement, however. The real importance was rebuilding it in brick; this represented a sizeable investment because the loss was not even close to being half covered by insurance. The brick buildings themselves, because of their cost, reflected the aura of optimism and lent a feeling of permanence to the town.

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<sup>96</sup>Times Herald, September 9, 1898.

#### CHAPTER XIV. MORE PROGRESS, ANOTHER DISASTER

Sometime before the 1884 fire the cypress industry was established in Palatka by Noah J. Tilghman and Son. The significance of this event was that for the first time the milling of cypress lumber, locally harvested, was begun. The Tilghman mill was well established by the time of the fire, but was not damaged by it. This industrial undertaking was to expand, although nearly another decade would pass before any great operation developed.

In 1885 two more railroads were organized, both of which served Palatka. The first was, according to one account, the St. Augustine and Palatka Railway Company, chartered on September 1, with a capital stock of \$250,000.00. It was a subsidiary of the St. Johns Railway for the directors of the latter organized the new road. The line, built at a cost of \$240,000.00, did not assume operation until 1886,<sup>1</sup> although on March 17 Editor Pratt stated, "It is a sad picture to contemplate that the placid waters of the St. Johns will have to succumb to formidable railroad opposition."<sup>2</sup> The "Palatka and St. Augustine Railway" (Pratt, always championing the cause of Palatka) was scheduled to begin operations by June 1. The road received 33,830 acres of land from the state as grants of aid.

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<sup>1</sup>Pettengill, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup>Palatka Herald, March 17, 1885.

Pratt was an observant man. The era of railroading was just on the threshold in Florida, yet he had the foresight to depict the inevitable. The railroad usurped the position of importance enjoyed by the steamboat during the decade.

In the same issue, Pratt shed light on the drought currently experienced in Palatka; he said, "One year ago our town was flooded with rain water; now it is as dry as a stick."

The other railroad company to stimulate Palatka was the Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad. It was chartered in Macon, Georgia in 1885, although construction did not begin until 1887. It covered the territory between Macon and Palatka, a distance of two hundred and eighty-five miles.<sup>3</sup>

In 1882, Utley J. White acquired the right of way for a narrow guage (three foot) track from East Palatka to the Atlantic coast. This later became part of the Flagler system.

The Southern Sun made its second debut on May 7, 1885, and incorporated into its first issue a description of the town. The publisher was Joseph H. Warren. The editor was Charles E. Warren. Their initial observation was that Palatka had assumed only a minor role in the state's commerce until "the present decade." Orange trees lined the streets of the town, and "nearly all private residences are surrounded by them." Forty-three wooden buildings were under construction in Palatka Heights, owned by Judge Burt; W. Winegar, the banker; and C.F. Teddy of Maine.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Pettengill, p. 109.

<sup>4</sup>Southern Sun, May 7, 1885.

The town marshal was B.F. Lassiter, who received a salary of sixty dollars per month, assisted by two policemen, Perry and Brown, each salaried at thirty-five dollars monthly.<sup>5</sup>

The Louis Canova Ice Plant operated twenty-four hours per day, producing ten tons of ice. Customers were served as far away as Sanford.

Engine Number Four of the Florida Southern left the track at Reddick on May 5 at 1:13 p.m. Apparently someone tore the lock from the switch and shifted the rails; when the engine left the track it turned on its side with the tender piled on top of it. All the flatcars were also all piled up.<sup>6</sup>

The Warrens recommended a number of improvements that they felt would benefit the community. One was to put the mayor on a salary rather than have him realize his income from fees assessed in Mayor's Court.<sup>7</sup>

Their recommendations shed a great deal of light on Palatka during 1885. Most of them indicate that which Palatka was without. Among other recommendations, their editorials suggested that the police be uniformed and that more men should be hired so as to patrol all four wards in town. The sewer system left a great deal to be desired, especially on Fourth from Lemon to the swamp where no sewer facility existed. Stock needed to be kept off the street entirely. There was a need for more artesian wells; one on Kirby, one in Newton and two on Lemon Street. Trees should be planted after

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.



the gutters were "widened and deepened" and elevated sidewalks needed to be installed. One hundred street lamps were necessary, as well as a great deal of work on the streets themselves. Lemon Street was obstructed by "piles of rubbish" and a "nest of old shanties."<sup>8</sup> Considering the dissatisfaction of the Warrens, it is not surprising that their enterprise enjoyed only a short existence.

A referendum election had been defeated in March which would have somewhat alleviated the situation; \$18,000.00 would have paid off the town's indebtedness, a fire engine costing \$10,000.00 was to have been purchased, and seven thousand dollars were to have been used to improve the streets and sewers.<sup>9</sup>

In 1885, while the Putnam House was being rebuilt by the Putnam House Company, S.J. Kennerly, President, the hotel man Oscar G. Barron visited Palatka. He became interested in the five hundred room structure and undertook management of it for five years. He also owned five hotels in other states. The new structure was built in a horseshoe shape, with a court in the center, planted with "the choicest flowers and tropical plants."<sup>10</sup> The hotel was also equipped with an elevator and electric lights.<sup>11</sup>

Another hotel, the Phoenix, was also open in 1885 from

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Palatka Daily News, March 11, 1885.

<sup>10</sup>C.A. Rohrabacher, Live Towns and Progressive Men of Florida (Jacksonville: Times-Union Printing and Publishing House, 1887) p. 129.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

December 23 to April 1, 1886.<sup>12</sup>

A hard freeze struck the Palatka area in January, 1886, the first of several to cause, collectively, the second disaster to affect the economic base of the community. It had longer lasting repercussions however, for it virtually terminated the importance of the citrus industry as far as the economy was concerned, although the whole agricultural effort was damaged in each of these instances. Other recorded freezes in the area were in January, 1857; December, 1870; and in December, 1880.

"Old Bill Rood" remembered that Palatka in the eighties was characterized by "more good times" than since that era. The town was "one big happy family," and there were no "select affairs," such as dominated life later.<sup>13</sup>

Mayor Henry R. Teasdale was a "good sport"; he ran an express office on the waterfront, and one could always find "a general bunch of loafers" on his porch.<sup>14</sup>

"There was no real privacy; no one demanded it." The city was "dry," but " . . . it was mighty wet every Saturday night . . . We was all pretty good people in them days, and we lived a life that was far less strenuous than what we are putting up with now."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>The hotel register for this period is in the Palatka Public Library.

<sup>13</sup>Palatka Daily News, February 27, 1924.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

Henry Flagler ventured to Florida for the first time in 1878. He returned five years later in December, 1883, while on his second honeymoon. He first stopped in Jacksonville but later took a steamer to Toccoi and then travelled overland on the St. Johns Railway to St. Augustine. He remained there until March 1.

He returned to Florida on February 17, 1885, and in March he decided to build the Ponce de Leon Hotel at St. Augustine, having been very much impressed with the town of two thousand residents on his previous visit.

All Florida was enthused about Flagler's coming for he represented the monied interests of the north being a partner of John D. Rockefeller in the oil industry. The people of Palatka were no exception, and they tried to induce him to erect a hotel in their town. His spokesman in St. Augustine, Doctor Andrew Anderson, informed them however, that Flagler was not interested in speculating in Florida and was building the one hotel in St. Augustine.<sup>16</sup>

Actually, two were erected. The Alcazar was built just across the street from the Ponce de Leon which was completed on May 30, 1887, but wasn't formally opened until January 1, 1888.<sup>17</sup> The Alcazar was built of the same material by the same contractors but

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<sup>16</sup>Sidney Walter Martin, Florida's Flagler (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1949) p. 108.

<sup>17</sup>Some lumber from Palatka mills was barged to Toccoi and then transported overland on the St. Johns Railway to St. Augustine where it was used in the Ponce de Leon.

it catered to lower income groups. It opened in late 1888 although it was not completely finished until 1889.<sup>18</sup>

Palatka persisted despite Anderson's advice and organized a committee to journey to New York to talk with Flagler. When hearing of this plan, Flagler wrote Anderson saying, "I note what you say about the Palatka people. If I can only be advised about their coming to New York, I will take pains to be out of town when they arrive."<sup>19</sup> The Palatkans heard of Flagler's attitude and cancelled the trip, highly chagrined.

Flagler's first railroad deal resulted from the refusal of the owners of the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Halifax Railroad to improve service on the line and he purchased it on December 31, 1885. He initially undertook to rectify the condition of the road by having new, heavier track of a wider gauge laid.<sup>20</sup>

The earliest railroad in the Palatka area was the St. Johns Railway which ran from Tocoli to St. Augustine. It was drawn by horses until 1870 when a small steam engine was added. John West built the road initially in 1858 and then sold it to William Astor. In 1886 Astor extended the line from Tocoli to East Palatka; this extension soon came to be known as the St. Augustine and Palatka Railway.<sup>21</sup> As noted above, U.J. White constructed a

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<sup>18</sup>Martin, Florida's Flagler, p. 117ff.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 109.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 131

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

narrow gauge track to facilitate logging operations in 1882. This line extended from East Palatka to San Mateo, and in turn was extended to Ormond and Daytona by White with the financial help of S.V. White.<sup>22</sup> The road was known as the St. Johns and Halifax Railway Company.<sup>23</sup> It was granted a right of way by the town council on July 25, 1887. Permission to construct either a wharf or bridge at the foot of Adams Street was given, but it had to be completed within a year. The right of way followed Adams, Laurel and Rose Streets to the mill area.<sup>24</sup>

The year 1888 was a busy one for Flagler's railroad project. In March he was elected to the Board of Directors of the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railroad which in October purchased the St. Johns and Halifax line. He also purchased the St. Augustine and Palatka and the St. Johns Railway in 1888. He improved all the roads by reconstructing them with standard gauge track.<sup>25</sup> By 1889 standard gauge was in use from Jacksonville to Daytona. The rolling stock had been improved and the system was as good as any in the South.

The need for a bridge across the St. Johns River was obvious to Flagler as he developed his rail net; he considered three locations: Jacksonville, Toccoi and Palatka. Palatka eventually was chosen and the first bridge across the St. Johns was to be

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Pettengill, p. 103.

<sup>24</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 76.

<sup>25</sup>Martin, Florida's Flagler, p. 131

completed on December 10, 1888.<sup>26</sup> The structure accommodated standard gauge track (five feet wide) and was built by T.H. Brown. It connected with the Florida Southern at a junction just west of Palatka.

In the meantime, Flagler changed his mind about a hotel in Palatka and toured to the place to discuss the possibility of acquiring sufficient waterfront property. Palatka hadn't changed its mind however, the incident of several years previous was still remembered and Flagler was " . . . refused the right to purchase lots on the river."<sup>27</sup> He was offered land away from the waterfront, but he would get no more than enough for the footing of the bridge along the riverbank.

Flagler left Palatka in an understandable huff. (Palatka at the time, according to Flagler's biographer, had two hotels, one of which was the Putnam House.) He did build the bridge but he located his depot in East Palatka, although he ran trains across to Palatka.<sup>28</sup> After the completion of the wooden bridge at Palatka he built one of steel at Jacksonville.

Despite the rebuff he later purchased land in Putnam County at Hastings and San Mateo, both of which were agricultural investments. He once invited the several hundred residents of San Mateo to the Alcazar; they enjoyed the trip and a dinner as his guests.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Pettengill, p. 105.

<sup>27</sup>Martin, Florida's Flagler, p. 132.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

Flagler raised shade tobacco on part of his land in San Mateo according to an undated pamphlet by M.M. Vickers of Palatka titled "San Mateo, Florida - The Home of the San Mateo Cigar." Other items included in the pamphlet were references to some of the residents: Colonel H.B. Bailey; John A. Crosby, who had a wharf on his property; P.G. Hicks; and George W. Lyle. The San Mateo Cigar Company instituted an all-out effort to attract more residents to the area by giving free lots, twenty-five by one hundred feet, to each purchaser of one thousand San Mateo Cigars at five cents per cigar packed in boxes of one hundred each. S.W. Rowley was treasurer of the company which had offices on the Kirkland and Marvick Blocks in San Mateo.

One railroad undertaking failed; the Silver Springs, Ocala and Gulf Railway, which was chartered to extend between Palatka and Point Pinellas at St. Petersburg, constructed only twenty-six miles of road from Ocala to Dunellon.<sup>30</sup> Other projected roads that did not materialize, all of which were to have served Palatka, were the Palatka and Tallahassee; the Palatka and Ocala; Palatka, Welaka and Lake Kerr; and the Jacksonville, Palatka and Ocala.<sup>31</sup>

Construction of the Georgia Southern and Florida Railroad began in 1887, as noted above, and the road opened on March 21, 1890; the first train arrived at Palatka from Macon at 6:30 a.m.

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<sup>30</sup>Pettengill, p. 86.

<sup>31</sup>Edward Rumley (ed.), Palatka, The Gem City of Florida, Palatka Board of Trade, 1887, p. 13.

the next day.<sup>32</sup> The road was already in financial trouble; it had been capitalized at \$500,000.00 in stock and the debt upon the opening of the line was \$3,240,000.00. A mortgage was held on the property of the company in both Palatka and Macon, including the roadbed, rolling stock and terminals. It went into receivership on March 10, 1891, and on April 2, 1895, was sold to the Southern Railway which reorganized it on May 22 as the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway Company.<sup>33</sup> Shortly, a wharf and terminal were built at Palatka. This line was one of the pioneers of the "chain gang" method, which meant it used the system of multiple power units.<sup>34</sup>

The first public transportation system in Palatka utilizing the rail as supporting a means of conveyance was authorized by the council on March 30, 1888. D.A. Boyd was chairman of the council at the time, and Cook Carleton was the clerk.<sup>35</sup>

A charter was given to the Palatka and Heights Street Railway Company and its successors, including the exclusive right to construct and operate a railway on the following streets: Lemon, Deer, Carr, Hapgood, Morris, Kirby, Second, Third, Emmett, Hotel, River, North, Laurel or Adams, Water, Front, Madison, Fleet, Olive, Jones, and Plutarch.<sup>36</sup> The power would be provided by a means other than a steam engine. The actual power used was that of a mule.

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<sup>32</sup>Pettengill, p. 109.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>35</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 75.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 73.



The company was to deposit five hundred dollars in trust in the First National Bank of Palatka to assure that it would comply with the stipulations of the ordinance which included its completing at least a mile of track by January 1, 1889. The company was not to charge more than five cents per mile for the fare. In return, it was granted the exclusive right of way on the tracks.<sup>37</sup>

No controversy centered on this proposal for approval by Mayor Henry R. Teasdale was immediate; his signature was affixed to the ordinance on the same day it was passed by the council.<sup>38</sup>

The ordinance was amended on January 14, 1890, to extend the route of the railway from the intersection of Lemon and Rutledge Streets following the latter to Main Street; also from the intersection of Rutledge and Orange west on Orange to Rose Street. Mayor W.J. Webb approved the extension.<sup>39</sup>

Another extension to the route occurred on March 19, 1895, when Mayor James D. Points approved an ordinance granting a right of way to the road from Emmett to Kirby on Morris Street, and also following Kirby to the original grant line for the duration of the initial charter.<sup>40</sup>

The road lost a driver, Will Livingston, in 1886 when he was killed in the railyard by a steam locomotive.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 73ff.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 106ff.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>41</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 19, 1953.

River traffic attempted to meet the challenge of the railroad and as the economic situation warranted, steam and sail activity increased. In the upper reaches of the St. Johns it became necessary to construct a lighthouse at the south end of Lake George. This installation, known as the Volusia Lighthouse, was erected in 1886 by the Federal Government which had acquired the land by donation from the State of Florida. The wooden frame and iron supports for the structure were shipped from Baltimore to the site, arriving there in December of 1885. Construction was completed by March and John Kane took charge as the first keeper on March 7. Three days later he " . . . lighted the main light and ranges."<sup>42</sup>

Evidence of the extent of steamboat activity was determined by perusing the number of lines in operation; in addition to the Hart Line were the Crescent City Line, the DeBary Line, the Palatka and Lake George, the Palatka and Federal Point, the People's Line, and the Warren Ray Line of Schooners which provided service from Palatka to New York.<sup>43</sup>

Two brothers from Michigan visited Palatka in 1889 and their subsequent activity had the greatest effect on Palatka since the coming of Colonel Hart. A.E. and H.S. Wilson, lumbermen from

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<sup>42</sup>Volusia Bar Light Station House Log. This log is at the Public Library in Palatka. Kane's last entry for this particular logbook was on August 31, 1896. The station was abandoned on October 26, 1943, and was later returned to the state. Keeper A.J. Anderson was murdered on duty in February, 1939; the crime has never been solved.

<sup>43</sup>Runley, Palatka, The Gem . . . , p. 13.

Saginaw, were "amused at the inefficiency of the Tilghman operation . . . ," but were interested enough so as to enter into a partnership with the latter firm in the processing of cypress.<sup>44</sup> In 1893 the Wilson's bought complete control of the firm and expanded the operation tremendously.

Although the economic picture was brightening what with all the activity, the increased pace was apparently not enough to satisfy some Palatkans who were just beginning to sample a higher standard of living. The hotels Arlington, Carleton and Winthrop were operating; Palatka now had a daily paper (see appendix), but the Palatka Times for December 11, 1889, suggested that an "excursion" be sponsored so as to encourage more economic activity.

The town was growing, although at a reduced pace. The population for the city totalled three thousand and thirty-nine inhabitants; there were an additional four hundred and fifty-four residing in Palatka Heights.<sup>45</sup> The county figure was up to 11,186, six thousand four hundred and four of whom were white.<sup>46</sup>

National Politics reached Palatka during the 1890's. The Farmers' Alliance, a coalition of the poorer southern farmers, white and Negro, emerged during the 1880's and, gathering substantial strength in a few short years, began to engage actively in political

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<sup>44</sup>Frank R. Owen, "Cypress Lumbering on the St. Johns River, 1884 to 1944" (unpublished term paper for HY 252, University of Florida Library, May 20, 1949.)

<sup>45</sup>U.S., Bureau of the Census, Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910 Population, II (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1912) p. 308.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 326.

affairs. How much desegregated activity existed in Palatka was not reported although there was a highly organized operation that reached from Welaka to Palatka to the area of the county west of the river.

The President of the Farmer's Alliance of Putnam County was T.W. Ralph of Hollister. Mrs. A. Townsend of Huntington was Vice President; O.L. Whitcomb of Melrose was the Secretary-Treasurer; the Lecturer was Lewis Morris of Palatka; Chaplain was G.W. Riles of McMeekin; Joseph W. Cannon of Francis was Doorkeeper; and John Hancock of Bostwick was the Sergeant-at-Arms.<sup>47</sup>

Local branches existed all over the county. They were located in Palatka, where the president was C.I. Rowton, Banana, Barker's Mill, Bostwick, Como, Crescent City, Francis, Federal Point, Fruitland, Hollister, Huntington, Long Branch, McMeekin, Norwalk, Peniel, Putnam Hall, San Mateo, Satsuma Heights, Siseo and Welaka.

On June 14, 1892, E.H. Padgett, the Chairman of the State Prohibition Party, and John R. Finch, Vice-Chairman, spoke at a Prohibition Convention held in Palatka. Padgett, who represented Florida at the national convention, called on all "reformers," regardless of their party affiliation, to join the movement. Editor H.A.B. McKenzie noted, ". . . drunken conventioners were conspicuously absent."<sup>48</sup>

At five o'clock on the afternoon of Wednesday, June 1,

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<sup>47</sup>Palatka Weekly Times, June 3, 1892.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., June 17, 1892.

a long low bass whistle was heard coming from the river. It was the steamer "St. Augustine," which was inaugurating what hopefully would be relief for Palatka in the economic sense. The "St. Augustine" arrived from New York. One Joe Mamcy of Palatka piloted the vessel from Jacksonville to the wharf adjacent to the Florida Southern depot. Cargo was unloaded all night Wednesday, the whole of Thursday and finally completed on Friday. The captain of the vessel, Alex C. Ray, a cousin to Warren Ray who owned the line, indicated that the "prospect is good" for a regularly scheduled trip to Palatka.<sup>49</sup>

Whether the following prices were representative before or after the arrival of the "St. Augustine" was not clarified, but on the Palatka market molasses sold for thirty-five to forty cents per gallon; a barrel of grits cost three dollars and forty cents; a barrel of lime was a dollar and ten cents; and a barrel of Portland cement sold for two dollars.<sup>50</sup>

Some representative rental fees were: guides, two and a half to three dollars daily; a saddle horse, a dollar and a half per day; a rowboat brought twenty-five cents hourly; and a steam powered launch commanded fifteen to twenty-five dollars daily.<sup>51</sup>

Railroad rate practices came under fire in June of 1892. Although the meeting at which the protests were drawn up was attended primarily by merchants, the Alliance was involved as well. Those

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Norton, A Handbook . . . , p. 188.

present described the raising of rates by the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West which had been manipulated so as to favor the economic structure of Jacksonville. It cost just as much to ship anything south from Palatka as it did to ship from Jacksonville effective June 1.

In July, Judge Vertrees reviewed the rate structure and found that the charges were true. He called for a law establishing a railway commission to regulate the rates established by public carriers.<sup>52</sup> This was one of the first instances to reflect a growing animosity between Palatka and Jacksonville. The rivalry continued until Jacksonville usurped Palatka economically and politically in the next decade, but the Palatkans, victims of geography more so than any other single factor, would continue to consider the place as being ideal for everything.

An ordinance was passed on November 20, 1893, providing up to \$7,500.00 for the paving of Lemon Street from Rose to Water. Joseph R. Dunn was the Chairman of the City Council and Pierre d'A. Pratt was clerk. Martin Griffin, Jr., the mayor, approved the act two days later, but it was sometime before the project was completed.<sup>53</sup> Part of the delay was attributed to the lack of finances. An election was held on October 7 to determine the voters' opinion as regarded borrowing three thousand five hundred dollars to pave the thoroughfare.<sup>54</sup> The issue passed, although the interest rate could have been as high as eight per cent per annum.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Palatka Weekly Herald, July 1, 1892.

<sup>53</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 61ff.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

Other factors leading to the lesser importance of Palatka as compared to Jacksonville's emergence included the elements; a freeze occurred in January, 1886, when the temperature dipped to fifteen degrees. On December 28, 1894, another cold wave penetrated south to the area. The loss was not so severe however, because most crops had been harvested.

These cold spells affected the tourist season as well as the agricultural industry. Normally the Palatka hotels opened in November and closed during May. In 1890 however, the Putnam House didn't open until January 10, and it closed in February.<sup>56</sup>

The cold weather figured in the deflation of the tourist industry but the significant factor was the extension of the railroad network south along the east coast.

There were at least seven hotels in Palatka in 1890. These were: the Arlington; Canova; Kean; Putnam House; Saratoga; West End House; and the Winthrop. Rates varied from fifty cents to four dollars per day.<sup>57</sup>

Civic improvements during the 1880's had strained the budget of the city to the point that it was necessary to call a referendum on a \$40,000.00 bond issue, most of which would be used to pay the town's indebtedness. The bond issue was approved on December 17, 1888; the interest rate was not to exceed eight per cent and the bonds had a

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>56</sup>Some of the hotel registers for the Putnam House are in the Palatka Public Library. Winters for which these are available are 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1895, 1898, 1911 and 1912.

<sup>57</sup>Norton, A Handbook . . . , p. 188.

twenty year maturity date.<sup>58</sup>

The money would be used to liquidate the debt owed for the construction of the city wharf at the foot of Main Street; for the cost of the fire engine and other apparatus; and for paying for an unidentified judgment against the city. Trustees of the bonds were to be R.J. Adams, Wesley C. Snow and William Bell.<sup>59</sup> Thirty-five of the bonds had a value of one thousand dollars, numbered one through thirty-five, and one hundred had a value of one hundred dollars each, numbered thirty-six through one hundred and thirty-five.<sup>60</sup> They were payable on January 1, 1909, at the American Loan and Trust Company in New York at an interest rate of seven per cent per annum.<sup>61</sup>

The rest of the money was used to expand the city cemetery, and for " . . . erecting within the city two suitable academies for learning, one for white and the other for colored children."<sup>62</sup> The little old red school house had neared the end of its usefulness, and the progress made by Mrs. White had proved all for naught; the need for a scapegoat was simply too great and the scapegoat was too readily available.

In January, 1887, the council approved the installation of forty-five fire hydrants; Mayor James E. Baldwin approved the measure on January 29.

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<sup>58</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 78.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 80

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 81.



One thing kept Palatka alive during this recessive period. The Wilson brothers purchased the whole Tilghman operation in 1893 and reorganized it as the Wilson Cypress Company. The first harvesting operation commenced on the west bank of the St. Johns opposite Welaka. "Pullboats" were used to yank the timber out of the swamps. These vessels were about sixty feet long, eighteen feet wide and drew six feet of water. A steam engine, or "donkey," powered a winch to which was attached a cable, some of which were a mile in length, that pulled the timber to the river.<sup>63</sup> Houseboats were located nearby to provide accommodations for the workers; initially there were three: one for the superintendent and his family, and one each for white and Negro workers. During 1902 the operation moved up the Oklawaha River Valley. A field headquarters was located near Eureka.

Operations on the Oklawaha were somewhat restricted because of a physical characteristic of the river; it was a narrow, twisting stream. After being "snaked-out" to the river, the logs were bunched to form rafts approximately twenty-five feet wide and thirty-two feet long. They were constructed around the "boom" log which was interwoven among the logs in the raft. When these smaller rafts reached the St. Johns they would be connected to form links of six, one hundred and fifty feet long, and then were towed to the mill in Palatka.<sup>64</sup>

Laborers making up the rafts received one dollar to one dollar and a half per day in wages; the raftmen who guided the timber to the

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<sup>63</sup>Owen, "Cypress . . . ," p.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

mill received one dollar per day, although a raft foreman received fifty cents more. The workers in the swamps cutting the timber were paid a dollar a day up plus room and board, while riggers received five dollars a day and subsistence.<sup>65</sup>

The operation expanded to a means of overland transportation in 1903 when a logging camp was established at Sunday Bluff on the east bank of the St. Johns. Shortly after, it was relocated at Astor, then referred to as Alco. Nearly one hundred laborers, mostly Negro, worked out of the field offices. The cypress was transported out of the valley area on a track some fifteen miles in length. Two locomotives of standard gauge had been purchased secondhand from the New York Elevated Railway and were pressed into the Wilson operation. A third engine, "Three-Spot," built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works, was purchased in 1910. During that same year the harvesting operation pushed south of Astor to Manhattan in the Spring Creek area.<sup>66</sup>

As the more readily available supplies of cypress were depleted, without much attempt at a reforestation program, the field operation had to be extended to points further away from Palatka although the mill remained in the town. The year 1911 was more than significant; harvesting north of Palatka at Green Cove Springs, and south at Stokes Landing commenced. In the same year the mill in Palatka burned to the ground, the first of two disastrous fires. It was rebuilt immediately and in 1913, the greatest harvest was

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

cut, 1,097,000,000 board feet of timber. By comparison, a total of the 1928-1937 average annual cutting amounted to 3,550,000 board feet.<sup>67</sup>

From 1915 to 1920 cutting operations moved to the Dunn's Creek area; a company railroad was constructed to Espanola. Another railroad camp was built on Lake George near Georgetown in 1918. During 1921 and 1922 the cutting moved to the Deep Creek area and then to Silver Springs for the next two years. The years 1923 and 1924 found the operation centered around Blackwater Creek in Lake County. The Oldtown Camp supplied timber for the Palatka mill from Dixie and Lafayette Counties in 1926. The timber was hauled to Palatka on the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.<sup>68</sup>

During the twenties it was a common practice to railroad the logs to the St. Johns River system and dump them. Then, after being formed into rafts, they would be towed to Palatka by Wilson Company tugs, such as the "Bohunk," "Broadaes," "Cypress," "Emma" and "Homer." These tugs tied up at one of the two piers at the mill. The piers, eighteen hundred feet long, also accommodated the shipment of finished lumber out of Palatka by company vessels as well as by larger vessels owned by transportation firms. These usually took the cargo to Jacksonville for trans-shipment. The Clyde Line was one company very much involved in the trans-shipment to markets in the north.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

The Palatka mill burned again on January 24, 1929. Rebuilt and modernized, it reopened on September 23, an all electric operation. The independence of the Wilson Company was apparent by noting that it generated its own electricity with Allis-Chalmers diesels, rather than purchasing it from a utility company.<sup>70</sup>

Most cutting from 1936 to 1944 was in Lake County. In the latter year the mill shut down its operation. Everything was eventually removed, including the piers, except a shed or two and the office building on River Street. The Wilson Mill was the second largest cypress operation in the world, surpassed only by a mill in Louisiana.<sup>71</sup>

Palatka experienced another hard freeze in December of 1894. This one sounded the death knell for Putnam County's citrus industry for the next five years brought equally severe freezes. During this freeze the library was born. Membership was two dollars per year and for forty cents annually, one could check out books, but apparently the institution had a slow beginning for on May 24, 1895, the editor of the Times-Herald asked, "Shall it be allowed to die for lack of nourishment and shelter?"

Elections in 1895 resulted in Benjamin J. Grooms defeating George M. Gay in the race for mayor by a plurality of eighty votes. The city council was re-elected en toto, and M.J. Truman continued as the chief of police. The City Treasurer was George Weller.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

A summer school for teachers was held in Palatka in July of 1895; the thirty teachers present resolved that "Prizes and Awards of Merit Should Not Be Awarded in Schools."<sup>73</sup> Lecturers included Professor Pasco who spoke on "School Discipline," and a literary society was organized by the Negro teachers.

The Times-Herald reported the organization of the Palatka Veterans Association on April 12, 1895. The Captain was J.D. Ponits (Company "A", 19th Virginia); W.H. Cyrus was the first lieutenant (Assistant Surgeon, 54th Indiana); M.I. Coxe (Captain, Company "A" of the 1st Florida Calvary) was second lieutenant; Joseph Price (Confederate States Navy) was adjutant; and the bugler was D. Leitchleitner (United States Navy). Membership fees were fifty cents and fifty badges "of beautiful design" identifying the organization were ordered.

An ordinance chartering the Palatka Telephone Company to install telephones in Palatka passed the council on April 11, 1894, and was approved by the mayor nine days later. Section One of the ordinance gave the company the ". . . exclusive right and franchise to the use of any and all streets: for the installation of poles and lines for a period of twenty-five years. The city was to retain the right to utilize the poles for a fire alarm system. Nine months were given to complete the project."<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Florida Times Union, April 11, 1895.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., July 21, 1895.

<sup>74</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 67.

The council on October 20, 1885, passed an ordinance granting privileges to the Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company, authorizing it to provide streetlights for the city for a fifteen year period of time. The work, according to Section Two, was to commence within two months and be completed in six months. The mayor vetoed the ordinance but it passed over his veto on October 27.<sup>75</sup> For some reason this project was delayed for ten years.

Electric streetlights finally came to Palatka in April of 1895. Fifteen arc lights of two thousand candlepower each and one hundred and one incandescent lamps of thirty-two candlepower each were installed. The arc lamps were located on Lemon Street primarily and the others on secondary thoroughfares. The Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company erected the system which was to function beginning May 8.<sup>76</sup> The company missed the deadline by about a week however. The Times-Herald on May 17 indicated the lights were then functioning and the city advertised seventeen old oil lamps and posts for sale a week later.

Other public works projects included the paving of Lemon Street with rock and brick, and concrete sidewalks were replacing the old boardwalks which, being rotten, " . . . forced pedestrians to walk in the middle of the street."<sup>77</sup>

The editor chided the absence of a new courthouse however, and expressed the opinion that eventually became well established in Palatka, that of donating to the city. In referring to a park

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<sup>75</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>76</sup>Times-Herald, April 26, 1895.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., May 17, 1895.

which was sorely needed, he recommended the land between Kirby and River Streets, south of the Westview Cemetery, saying, "We do know the owner could afford to donate it to the city." He also expressed concern over the school; the "old red school house" had been torn down in 1890 and currently classes were held in ". . . the poorest, shabbiest old rickety specimens we have . . ." on Lemon Street.<sup>78</sup>

Palatkans had a tendency to look forward to the slightest possibility that some form of economic relief would come to the town. Even if a company only remotely considered locating in Palatka a wave of over-optimism swept the community and spurred on speculation. This would occur time and again after the freezes that in part ruined two facets of the area's income.

Such was the case in July of 1895; the American Cigar and Tobacco Company expressed an interest in establishing a plant that would employ six hundred female workers who would manufacture 200,000 cigars daily and earn seventy-five cents daily for their efforts. The plant was to be located in the Putnam House, which, due to the slacking off in tourism, had been closed intermittently for several years.<sup>79</sup>

By the time the summer ended there was still no plant. The Palatkans had invested \$30,000.00 in the company, donated fifty acres of land and had promised it exemption from taxation for ten years.

In their naivety they asked, "What happened to its promise

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., May 17, 1895.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., July 26, 1895.

to come to Palatka?" in referring to the tobacco company.<sup>80</sup>

During 1895, the tax issue was a topic of considerable discussion and, at the same time, a highly prohibitive lever on the practitioners of certain trades when the license fees were noted.

The license for a hotel accommodating two hundred or more persons cost seventy-five dollars. A graduated scale determined the fee for smaller establishments of this type, the fee being just about halved with each twenty-five per cent reduction in the number of accommodations offered.<sup>81</sup>

No one under twenty-one years of age could play billiards, and poolhall operators were assessed a fee of seven dollars and fifty cents per table.<sup>82</sup> Merchants, druggists and storekeepers were favored, assuming these were more acceptable trades, paying only a dollar and a half on stock valued at less than five hundred dollars. Again, a graduated scale was devised; those with over five thousand dollars worth of stock paid seven dollars and fifty cents.<sup>83</sup>

Boat owners paid five dollars if the vessel displaced less than twenty tons and fifteen dollars if more.<sup>84</sup> "Hawkers, and venders of medicine" paid fifty dollars per day.<sup>85</sup> Those " . . . itinerant

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., September 6, 1895.

<sup>81</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 13.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 14

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 15

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., p. 16

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.



venders (sic) of drugs, ointment, or appliance of any kind for the treatment of disease, deformity or injury. . . . "had to pay a two hundred dollar fee."<sup>86</sup> Dog licences were a dollar and a half.<sup>87</sup>

Anyone throwing a dead animal into "any body of water" was subject to being punished by up to ten days in jail or a thirty dollar fine.<sup>88</sup>

Any fire company damaging private property while on a call would be held responsible,<sup>89</sup> and an organization known as the "Fire Police" was created to keep the curious away from the blaze. Each member was given a badge, a stake and a length of rope measuring forty feet. They were sworn in by taking the following oath: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully and impartially perform all duties incumbent on me as a member of the Palatka Fire Police, so help me God."<sup>90</sup>

It was the duty of each person occupying a lot to remove " . . . noxious growth from that property."<sup>91</sup> Section Fifteen of the Health Code required all "livery Manure" to be removed once a week.<sup>92</sup>

The only vehicles allowed on the sidewalks were baby carriages; violators could receive thirty days or fifty dollars.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

The same punishment could be meted out to " . . . bikes and carriages without a bell, or whistle and lantern."<sup>94</sup>

Section Thirteen of the paragraph entitled Peace, Good Order and Morals read, "Anyone fishing on the St. Johns River within the city limits of Palatka with a line, seine, cast or drag net, or catch (ing) any fish by any means . . . " would be punished by up to thirty days in jail or a fine of twenty-five dollars.<sup>95</sup>

TABLE 20  
CITY OFFICIALS' SALARIES: 1895<sup>a</sup>

Title	Annual Salary	Required Bond
Clerk	\$300.00	\$500.00
Treasurer	100.00	7500.00
Assessor	250.00	500.00
Collector	300.00	7500.00
Chief of Police (monthly)	60.00	1000.00
Policeman (monthly)	45.00	None

<sup>a</sup>Davis, Ordinances . . . , p. 52ff.

The Police Court was presided over by the mayor; witnesses who were summoned were paid fifty cents per day.<sup>96</sup>

In February, 1892, a strange craft appeared in Palatka. It was the "Gemini," a catamaran twenty-two feet long with an eight foot beam owned by Captain A.P. Fitzhugh of Picolata. He used the vessel for chartering hunting and fishing excursions on the upper

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 56ff.

reaches of the river. When under power, its two horse-power motor drove the craft at a speed of eight miles per hour.<sup>97</sup>

Another maritime innovation occurred in May, 1896. Captain J.E. Lucas, owner of the steamboat "Eulala," contracted for the construction of an " . . . immense steam marine-railway, which will be completed about July 1st. This railway will take the largest steamer that comes to Palatka . . ."98

The Patten Anderson Chapter (number Seventy-Six) of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was organized at the home of Mrs. E.M. Haughton in a meeting called by Mrs. B.A. Deal on July 27, 1896. The latter was elected president and ten members signed the original charter. The following year found the membership numbering eighteen and by 1898 there were twenty-one persons on the rolls. Mrs. Patten Anderson was president in 1898.

One of the first undertakings of the group was to erect a marble headstone on the graves of former Confederate servicemen. Eventually, sixty-two were placed all over the county and the chapter provided many others outside the area.

Other projects included providing scholarships, purchasing books for the library and securing " . . . several original reminiscences of the war . . . for the historian's files." They provided portraits of Davis and Lee for the school, and boasted,

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<sup>97</sup>Times-Herald, February 5, 1892.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., May 15, 1896.

"A watch has been kept upon the textbooks used in our schools . . . ."99

The state convention of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was hosted by the local chapter in 1902.

A thousand dollars was collected during World War One for liberty bonds and the highlight of the club's achievements occurred in 1924 when, largely through the efforts of Mrs. R.F. Adams, a memorial was dedicated on the courthouse square.

Other presidents included Mrs. H.A.B. McKenzie (1916); Mrs. John Walton (1918); and Mrs. R.F. Adams (1924). The historian responsible for recording much of what the chapter accomplished was Miss Susie Lee Anderson.

As the decade waned, Palatka matured to the extent that it began to withdraw, despite the fact that many civic improvements had been made. The indebtedness incurred by the projects which lent a semblance of progress to the town eventually reached the point when there was a reaction to all the spending. The Times-Herald reported that no "formal celebration" was held on July 4, 1898 in Palatka. Those who desired to celebrate the occasion travelled to Jacksonville aboard the steamer "Metamora" which had been chartered by the firemen. In Palatka, during the afternoon, a reporter related what he considered to be an "amusing incident"; in walking about the town he found some boys aged seven to thirteen or thereabouts in front of Ling Wah's Chinese laundry on Front Street. Each of the group had a small brass cannon and they:

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<sup>99</sup>Palatka Daily News, February 26, 1924.

. . . were firing away at the Chinamen for dear life. When the reporter passed they informed him that they had just taken Santiago, and now they continued in a deafening chorus, 'we are bombarding Hong Kong.'<sup>100</sup>

The seed had been planted. It wasn't enough that the Negro had to be subjected to the contempt; anyone other than white was considered to be "open season." Ling Wah had purchased the laundry from Sam Lee only two years previous to the incident.

Not every Palatkan held the same convictions. Only a year before, T. H. Livingston, editor and proprietor of The Evening Recorder was one of many short-lived papers; if the editors did not preach the "line" they soon lost all hope of survival. There were thirty-one known newspapers in Palatka from 1846 until 1925.

Livingston only commented on the organization of the Palatka Board of Trade. It had been formed on the evening of Thursday, February 25, 1897, E. S. Crill had been elected president and the vice-president was A. E. Wilson. The Board of Trade was the contemporary Chamber of Commerce and would do much to benefit the city in the years to come.<sup>101</sup>

About the turn of the century the water hyacinth developed into somewhat of a problem for navigation. Palatka was troubled with "the beautiful pest!", especially because of the change in the width of the river. The St. Johns has a tidal fluctuation

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<sup>100</sup>Times-Herald, July 6, 1898.

<sup>101</sup>The Evening Recorder, February 20, 1897.

of a foot or more all the way to Palatka; when this is coupled with the breadth of the river to that point there is a tendency for the water to accumulate in Palatka's harbor including all the flotsam attendant thereto. This meant that the hyacinth, depending on the wind and water motion, backed up in the bay. The situation was aggravated by the construction of the railroad bridge across the river. Of necessity, the piling supporting the structure were driven fairly close together and this served very effectively to trap the hyacinth in the bay.

Letters of complaint describing the situation appeared about 1898; the usual solution was that the railroad should be made to build another bridge spacing the piling further apart so as to facilitate the washing away of the plant. The controversy about this issue was similiar to many that served to comprise the odd combination of attracting business interests to the town and then, realizing that everything has certain less desirable characteristics, undertake to force the interest to alter its habits so that a return to the good old days could be once again experienced.

Nevertheless, the decade after the fire served as one of the two great periods of development in the town's history. For most of the townfolk the improvements were welcomed, but they were not happy about paying the price. A general drift towards conservatism set in during the latter 1890's, and the first progressive era came to a halt. It would not reappear for another twenty years.

The effect of this attitude on the growth of the population was apparent. The tremendous increase in population during

the two preceding decades has been noted. The rate of increase dropped significantly during the 1890's, due in part to nature. Palatka experienced a hard freeze on December 30, 1894, when the temperature dropped to fourteen degrees. It fell to ten degrees, the lowest recorded, on February 8, 1895. Subsequent freezes occurred in January, 1898, and in February, 1899. These resulted in the almost total removal of the citrus industry which had once centered about the town.<sup>102</sup>

Another factor which slowed the development of marine activity was the railroad. It did contribute to Palatka's economy but it took away a thriving river business which really centered in the town.

The first real analysis of Palatka's physical composition appeared in 1899 when the initial directory was published. The sixty page text noted, among other things, that Palatka's three thousand nine hundred and fifty residents were accommodated by eight hundred and sixty-five buildings. Business houses accounted for one hundred and sixty-five of these and three hundred and nineteen were owned by their occupants. Tenants numbered five hundred and forty.

Politically, George E. Gay was mayor; the town was divided into seven wards, each having two councilmen. P. M. Hagan was police chief.

There were five white and six Negro churches. The latter were not named but the former consisted of the Baptist, Reverend

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<sup>102</sup> Other recorded low temperatures were twenty-four degrees on January 21, 1873; nineteen degrees on December 30, 1886; and fifteen degrees on January 12, 1886. Times-Herald January 4, 1918.

William Stones; the Catholic, Father John O'Brien; the Episcopal, Reverend R. M. Avery; the Methodist, Reverend R. L. Honniker; and the Presbyterian, Reverend Thomas P. Hay.

Twenty-four social functions existed; fifteen of these were white.

No "garages" existed, that is, nothing commercial to accommodate any vehicles, but there were twenty-one retail groceries and four wholesale firms. Four steamboat lines served the town: the Beach and Miller; the Clyde Line; the Hart Line; and the Oklawaha River Line. Four hotels were operative: the Arlington, Graham, Kimball, and the Putnam House, the latter open only during the winter. Harry Messmer operated the one barbershop. Other businessmen included eleven lawyers, five physicians, four fruggists and two undertakers.<sup>103</sup>

The 1900 Census indicated that the population in Putnam County was 11,641; an increase of only four hundred and fifty-five persons during the decade. The proportion of white to Negro changed significantly. Figures for whites in 1900 indicated a decline as compared with the 1890 Census. There were three hundred and eighty-seven fewer whites for a total of six thousand and seventeen; the Negro population on the other hand increased by eight hundred and forty-three to five thousand six hundred and twenty-one. Nearly half of Putnam's population then was Negro.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 24, 1924.

<sup>104</sup>U. S., Thirteenth Census . . . ., p. 326.



Palatka's increase was also small; only two hundred and sixty-two more people resided in the city in 1900 than in 1890. The total was three thousand three hundred and one.<sup>105</sup>

Palatka Heights fared even worse. Its population declined by one hundred people over the ten year period to a total of three hundred and fifty-four persons.

The great expansion of Putnam County was over. No subsequent period would witness the rate of growth that the area enjoyed during the decade after the fire. A general increase would of course occur, but the rate would be drastically reduced. Economics was the basic factor involved and the pressures exerted on Palatka's economic base were, as noted, many and varied; others were uncontrollable.

Palatka was not beginning the new year, and the last year of the nineteenth century, with a great deal of optimism.

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<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 308.

CHAPTER XV. "OLD PUTNAM"

Palatka started the new year by making a bid for the proposed relocation of the capital of Florida. James Burt wrote the editor of the Palatka Times-Herald on August 3, 1900, stating, "Palatka was the best spot." This was the first publicly stated opinion relating to the relocation of the state seat of government in years. A much more intensive campaign would follow in the years to come.

An injustice inaugurated the new century. Train Number Ten of the Plant system arrived at Palatka on October 17, 1901, payday. The engineer, and victim, was Henry Wesson, who, at five o'clock in the morning left the train for home but stopped at the fountain some several hundred feet from the roundhouse for a drink of water. He heard a noise, reached for the pistol he carried with him and was shot in the forehead.

Wesson carried the pistol because of a premonition; he mentioned to F. R. LeBaron, the conductor, that a Bahamian Negro fireman named Jim Johnson had "glared at him malignantly," and, being frightened, Wesson purchased the weapon.<sup>1</sup>

Johnson, however, was not on the train. Wesson's body was found about five thirty a.m. and it was determined that although his pay was still in his pocket, his watch was gone.

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<sup>1</sup>"Who Was the Phantom Killer of Train #10?", Master Detective, (June, 1934) p. 38.

There were two primary suspects. One was J. B. Brown, "a powerful man with a speech impediment," who was known to have disliked Wesson for loaning a gun to Le Baron. Le Baron had beaten Brown and feared that he would seek revenge. Johnson was implicated because he had talked to Le Baron shortly before the murder. Four other Negroes were arrested on suspicion of murder as well.

When Brown was arrested he had a thirty-two caliber pistol in his possession, the same size used to shoot Wesson. He maintained that the weapon had been planted on him by Special Agent P. M. Davidson of the railway company. All but Johnson and Brown were released, and a lynch mob threatened them.

Brown was subsequently accused of being the guilty party by a man named Lonnie Mitchell who had heard Brown confess while in the same cell with him. Henry Davis, in an adjacent cell, claimed he heard the confession as well. On November 16 the grand jury charged Brown and Johnson with first degree murder; Brown reportedly committed the act and Johnson was his accomplice. The indictment had been written by State Attorney Syd L. Carter and was signed by Noah J. Tilghman.

Johnson had requested his mistress, Hester, to get rid of an important piece of evidence, the watch. He'd hidden it under a window sill on the east side of a house at Main and Fifth Streets, but a Negro detective, Dave English, found the watch, which had a picture inside it, before Hester could retrieve and destroy the evidence.

The evidence convicted Brown who maintained his innocence

throughout the trial. He'd been represented by a court appointed defense counsel, John E. Marshall. Carter, the prosecuting attorney, was assisted by Benjamin P. Calhoun, " . . . one of Putnam County's most popular lawyers."<sup>2</sup>

Judge W. S. Bullock, in his first term in the Fifth Judicial District, felt Brown didn't get a fair trial, due primarily to the fact that he " . . . did not have the most eminent counsel for his defense."<sup>3</sup> The verdict was returned on November 21; Brown was found guilty on the basis of the evidence accumulated while he was in jail. Bullock also felt the suspect's speech impediment helped convict him.

After the trial, Mary McLeod Bethune, a Palatka teacher, attempted to seek justice for Brown by collecting funds from the Negro community to appeal the case. George P. Fowler was hired to provide counsel before the State Supreme Court. It upheld the original decision on March 11, 1902.

Brown's execution date was set, and each day he was informed by the jailer just how long he had to live. He was even able to see the construction of the gallows that would hang him from his cell window. Fowler had not given up however; on the night before the date of execution he obtained from Governor W. S. Jennings a stay of execution on the basis that there had been an irregularity in the case. Noah Tilghman's name was where Brown's was supposed to be on the death warrant. Brown's sentence was reduced to life imprisonment.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

The militia had to be called out to maintain order on the execution date. Brown had the noose around his neck when the telegraph operator ran to with the stay signed by the governor. He began serving his sentence at a phosphate mine near Mulberry, then was transferred to a turpentine camp and then another mine at Holder which was run by one R. C. Camp. Camp recognized Brown who had once saved Camp's life in an accident at Dunellon. Camp asked that Brown be pardoned on April 18, 1911; Brown had been a trusted prisoner for six years. Judge Bullock also recommended that Brown be pardoned. So did Davis who'd subsequently been jailed in 1911 and English, also jailed in 1913. Johnson died in 1908, but not until October, 1913, was Brown pardoned, an "old broken man."<sup>4</sup> Camp pensioned him and so did the State of Florida in 1929 when successful efforts made by two Ocala lawyers named Sturgis and Wallace resulted in Brown's receiving thirty dollars per month for life.<sup>5</sup>

Thus Palatka's racism was demonstrated. It would continue to use the Negro as a scapegoat for the next two decades. Much of this type of activity was brought to light by the press, but those editors who protested the treatment were not destined to survive in Palatka. Southern apartheid emerged overtly in Palatka as it did elsewhere, as an attempt to keep the Negro in his place.

More of this attitude was demonstrated by Messrs. Russell and Vickers in their January 9, 1902, issue of the Palatka News

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

and Advertiser. A sewer bond issue for \$175,000.00 had been approved by the voters; actually, it hadn't, for of four thousand residents, the issue passed by a vote of sixty-four to fourteen. Editor Russell blamed the freeholders who failed to register, specifically the ". . . large black contingent who hate to give up a dollar for the privilege of voting." What he was not saying was that the political machine was unsuccessful in obtaining votes for its cause, which was opposed to the issue. Judge Vertrees commented, "I think it is a thing that the town will regret more than anything we have ever done in our lives."<sup>6</sup> Palatka's conservatism was established.

The town was terrorized by a pyromaniac for the first two years of the new century. On January 20, 1902, the Putnam House was fired but damage was limited to five hundred dollars because the blaze was discovered by Mrs. Catto and in half an hour it was under control. The city council offered a reward for the arsonist who'd escaped by crawling under a manhole on Reid Street.<sup>7</sup>

William Catto was charged with the crime on May 1, although he was acquitted a week later. Catto, the caretaker of the hotel, which had been vacant for two years and only the previous month leased by F. H. Hafer, was released for lack of evidence in Bullock's court.<sup>8</sup> Catto sued Doctor A. M. Steen, Antonio Usina and S. J. Kennerly for \$50,000.00 each immediately

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<sup>6</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, January 9, 1902.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., January 23, 1902.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., May 8, 1902.

after the annual for " . . . slander and defamation of character,"<sup>9</sup> later won twelve hundred dollars from Usins when a jury in Jacksonville decided Usins did slander Cotto by charging him with starting the fire.<sup>10</sup>

The light of the library was somewhat eased, to the extent of seventy-five dollars, when the Women's Fortnightly Club held a benefit "musicale" for the cause.

A "gala celebration" was held in Palatka on July 29, 1902. Special features included a two day baseball tournament, yacht races and a parade. Special trains and steamboats were scheduled to accommodate the ten thousand visitors expected, but these proved insufficient; the Georgia Southern and Florida " . . . had to press into service many boxcars to accommodate the crowd . . . ." from Lake City and Valdosta. Other specials came from Jacksonville, Leesburg, Ocala and Sanford. "All the steamers that could be pressed into service were loaded to the gunwales."<sup>11</sup> Free ice water was available in tanks and barrels in the streets and lemonade vendors provided other refreshment. The eleven man Palatka Citizen's Band and the Gem City Cornet Band provided music. Palatka lost to Gainesville in the ballgame, and the yacht race was won by the "Dolphin" beating "Flukey" and "Martha" on Tuesday; "Martha" won on Wednesday. The celebration was terminated with a dance at the armory.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, April 21, 1905.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., July 31, 1902.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.



Putnam began to capitalize on the first of several conventions to be held in the town when three hundred delegates of the National Farmer's Congress, having just concluded a session in Macon, journeyed south on the Georgia Southern and Florida. The lack of hotel facilities was evident when the editor pointed out that fifty of the conventioners had to be accommodated in private residences; the others were in the hotels Arlington, Graham, James, St. George and Saratoga. "Had the Putnam House been open there would have been no need to separate the visitors."<sup>13</sup> Apparently this was only the pleasure portion of a business meeting for nothing in the press indicated what had transpired in convention in Palatka, although the steamers "Crescent" and "Mist" were used to introduce the delegates to the St. Johns River.

An editorial on November 6 sparked a new campaign to clean up the town. Lemon Street was described as "our principal municipal eyesore," indicating that perhaps the fire of 1884 hadn't been completely successful.<sup>14</sup> Mayor A. M. Steen, M. D., addressed the city council the following April, informing them that the streets were in terrible condition, the wharves were "unsightly," the approaches to Palatka via railroad were "unsightly," and conditions around Union Depot needed vast improvement. Steen recommended the employment of a sanitary engineer to oversee the cleaning up of the place.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., October 16, 1902.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., November 6, 1902.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., April 24, 1903.

The Federal Government hired the Palatkans in January, 1903, when a number of cattle were reputedly poisoned by a weed killer used to control the hyacinth in Rice Creek. The steamer "Le Reve" was using a spray with an arsenic base to kill the weed and John Glisson of Bostwick reported that sixteen of his cattle had died. Initial protests failed to halt the operation but the farmers continued to feed their cattle the hyacinth as forage. Whether the protests, or claims, were ever settled was not reported. The "Le Reve" was relieved but returned to Palatka in July, 1904, to continue the work, although a new captain, W. L. Hemmenway, was in charge of the vessel. The project cost the government \$25,000.00.<sup>16</sup>

Marine activity continued; the "William Howard" neared completion at Boyd's yard. The vessel was being built for Captain J. H. Howard of Grahamsville and displaced ninety-seven tons with a length of eighty-five feet and a beam of twenty-one feet. A double decker, the craft had a kitchen, dining room, staterooms and quarters for the captain.<sup>17</sup>

In March, one of the Oklawaha steamers was lost. The "Metamora" sank a mile from the mouth of the river in the early morning of March 19. The vessel was ". . . loaded with passengers," but all except two crewmen escaped. Cain Butler and Walter Watson both drowned. Only the upper cabin of the vessel remained above water, ". . . a crushing loss to Captain Lucas."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., July 29, 1904.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., April 3, 1903.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., March 20, 1903.

Captain Frederick E. Rossignol and Fred Priest, First Engineer of the vessel, were held responsible for the accident in June. A hearing was held in July and both were determined negligent; Rossignol's license was revoked for a year, but Priest lost his " . . . for all time."<sup>19</sup> The two were exonerated in August however, when it was determined by John W. Coast, United States Supervising Inspector for the Third District, that the captain was not on duty at the time the vessel sank. Priest, who was in trouble because it was suspected he had no license, had his license revoked for three months when it was determined he'd taken an exam allowing him to work on a larger boat only several days prior to the sinking. The cause of the disaster never was determined.<sup>20</sup>

The importance of the cypress industry in the town's economy was measured in part by the number of vessels present in the harbor used to convey lumber to the markets. The schooner "R. T. Rundlett" was hauling cypress to Maryland from Tilghman's mill, and the schooners "Maud H. Dudley," "John W. Hall," "John H. May," "William H. Skinner" and "Stetson" were transporting lumber from the Wilson company.<sup>21</sup>

Lucas' new boat was under construction at Boyd's yard in September. The vessel, eighty-five feet long and twenty-three feet in beam, was named "Mahngotaysee." Boyd also was building a twenty-three foot launch for Judge Vertrees and was outfitting

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., July 24, 1903.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., August 7, 1903.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., May 15, 1903.

the "Spray."

This maritime activity qualified Palatka to be recommended as a sub-port of entry in October, but the efforts of C. A. Macatee of the Treasury Department were unsuccessful when it was decided the following month not to give Palatka this responsibility.

No one organization has done more for Palatka than the Palatka Board of Trade. It began early in 1903 and received much support from the press. The editor of the Palatka News and Advertiser said on May 15, that it ". . . might solve the Putnam House problem. As it stands at present that great vacant hostelry is a menace to the city. It is a public nuisance."<sup>22</sup> The controversy over the greatest physical structure in Palatka up to World War Two had started. The Putnam House would open in the future, but it would be a bone of contention until it was finally destroyed in 1922. The editor supported another cause; "There should be a modern highway and bridge across the river."<sup>23</sup>

Whether this topic spurred the organization of the Board of Trade was not clear, but on May 20, 1903, the agency was formally organized in the city hall by forty-four charter members who elected Henry S. Wilson as president; George E. Gay as vice-president; F. H. Hafer as secretary; and Howell A. Davis as treasurer. In Wilson's absence, Gay established a five man

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

committee to devise a constitution for the organization.<sup>24</sup>

The Board of Trade was probably not yet capable of pushing for a development that was born in June, but undoubtedly some of its members had individual roles to play in it. The county commissioners determined on June 2, to construct a bridge for wagons and pedestrians across the St. Johns River. All five of the commissioners favored the proposal which was declared " . . . a forward move for old Putnam."<sup>25</sup> Chairman F. J. Fearnside was the instigator of the project.

An agent of the War Department (which had jurisdiction over all waterways in the United States) was to journey to Palatka the following week to study the exact location of the proposed structure but his efforts were unsuccessful. The issue became a tussle among the local politicians and no bridge would be constructed at Palatka for years to come. The city got in on the act when it agreed to maintain the bridge for a period of four years.<sup>26</sup>

Other developments in Palatka were begun during the summer of 1903. The city council in August approved the purchase of the old Larkin property by the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway so as to construct a depot and dock facilities on the site. The railroad was also given the right of way through Peck, Laurel and Adams Streets to provide access to the proposed \$50,000.00 improvement. Suspicion bared itself in April, 1904,

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1903.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., June 5, 1903.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., June 26, 1903.

however, when Editor Russell reported the laxity of the railroad to initiate the proposed depot facilities; he observed that "a gang of men" had appeared at the site, ". . . threw a few shovelfuls of dirt . . ." and then ". . . silently stole away and haven't been seen since."<sup>27</sup> He was still optimistic however, for he maintained that the new depot would probably be built.

Long distance telephone service came to Palatka in August, 1903. Lines had been extended from Jacksonville along the Florida East Coast Railroad tracks, making Palatka the southernmost place in the state with the service.<sup>28</sup>

One of the first candidates for a state position was Congressman Robert Davis who announced his interest in the governorship in the Palatka News and Advertiser.<sup>29</sup> Palatka would support wholeheartedly this candidate as a "hometown product" much as it would do in the future.

The unidentified arsonist started the new year off with a blaze that rankled all of Palatka to the extent that vigilantism was suggested. Lucas' new boat, the "Mahngotaysee," launched on November 24, was put to the torch during the holiday season while being fitted out at Boyd's yard. The destruction was complete; the fire was uncontrollable because the vessel had been ". . . too thoroughly oiled." The smell of kerosene was strong and an empty can was found floating near the hulk. Lucas had the vessel insured for three thousand dollars although the

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., April 15, 1904.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., August 14, 1903.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., October 30, 1903.

loss was estimated to be five thousand. It would have been greater but the engines had not yet been installed.

Also damaged in the blaze was the "Le Reve," the government boat involved in the hyacinth control project. The captain of the craft, John W. Harllee was burned during the blaze.

Russell wrote:

Citizens of Palatka. This firebug must be located. If necessary, special detectives should be put on the case. Look for the culprit among those who have a motive. Captain Lucas has enemies, plenty of them. Some of his enemies are also enemies of Palatka. It is now time for the city to step into the case and do some investigating and, perhaps, some--hanging.<sup>30</sup>

Strong words, these. But Palatkans could remember 1884 and fire was always a constant threat as indicated above, intentional or not. The increased incidence of fires spurred the town to push for a new fire station on Reid Street. Chief C. E. Rowton recommended that three or four full time firemen be hired to replace the hitherto completely voluntary fire fighting force.<sup>31</sup>

A sense of civic need was slowly developing. It was, however, realized that to plan meant to postpone indefinitely. For this reason, the suggested bridging of the river was to continue as an ultimate development, but the Board of Trade, more concerned with the present, proposed to go ahead with the providing of ferry service to East Palatka immediately. This was not to interfere with the long range goal of the bridge itself.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., January 1, 1904.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., January 8, 1904.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., January 15, 1904.

Later in the month another interim improvement was noted. Twenty carloads of gravel were railed in, at the price of twenty-seven dollars per load, to pave Lemon Street until the money for brick paving could be obtained. Russell, now more optimistic, claimed, "Palatka and Putnam County have now reached the turning point which leads from its former depression . . ."

. . ."33

The measures taken were only token to some citizens. A letter written to the editor described the filth in town, especially the streets:

Gutters full of water with green slime on top, waste paper choking up the main street, and with the advent of spring weeds of noxious kinds growing high in the center of the highway, these are conditions which call for action quick and lasting. Up citizens, and act!<sup>34</sup>

The seed of discontent was planted. Perhaps much of it had to do with the city elections in April. A new slate of city officials appeared after April 5. M. M. Vickers was elected mayor and the seven aldermen elected were: (in order of the seven wards) B. I. Gay; Arthur R. Castonel; Joseph D. Points; Tom Holden; William Ivers; E. T. Holmes (from Ward Six, a Negro); and T. O. Livingston.<sup>35</sup>

As a result of postal receipts totalling more than ten thousand dollars during the year ending March 31, 1903, Postmaster D. M. Kirby announced that Palatka was now entitled to free delivery service. He petitioned for this service in

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., February 5, 1904.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., March 11, 1904.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1904.



August, 1904, but not until June, 1909, would any positive results be realized. He informed Palatka on June 15 that government approved mail boxes would arrive shortly and that they should not purchase boxes from agents who had a practice of renting these on a door to door basis for fifty cents for a five year period of time. The boxes had a habit of never showing up.<sup>36</sup>

The town was divided into two routes at Lemon Street. Two deliveries were made daily, morning and afternoon, by the two regular carriers, N. A. Stumpe, a former carpenter, and C. B. White, former principal of the Negro high school. Wendell Beasley was employed as the first substitute carrier.<sup>37</sup>

Palatka finally got its sanitary engineer in May, 1904, in the person of H. C. Loomis. The council hired him at a salary of forty dollars monthly. At the same meeting it authorized a committee to study the plans for the recommended fire station which would also house the city government offices. The building was not to exceed five thousand dollars in cost.<sup>38</sup>

The street railway system received much attention in May. The "general manager," Thomas Jefferson Thompson, took the right of way granted the company most seriously when he ran into a hack driven by George Wiggins, who promptly thrashed Thompson. Russell wrote, "Thompson thought his company was the whole thing on the streetcar track and that it was his privilege as

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., June 15, 1909.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., May 28, 1909.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1904.

representative of the company to butt into anything that got in his way."<sup>39</sup> Judge Hecall fined Thompson three dollars for reckless driving and citizens fifteen dollars plus costs.

The pride of Palatka, the Gem City Guards, was inspected by Colonel S. T. Howell, United States Army (retired), in July. The colonel reported the general appearance as "good"; the uniforms were worn, but serviceable; the condition of their arms was "good"; and they were "fairly well drilled," although they'd had "very little extended drill." The report continued, "The men appeared intelligent, zealous, and earnest in the discharge of their duties."<sup>40</sup> They were commanded by Captain E. Noble Calhoun; R. Raymond Price was the first lieutenant and Charles Burt was the company's second lieutenant. The non-commissioned officers included Ralph Ranking as first sergeant; C. H. Wigg as quartermaster sergeant; staff sergeants Gordon, Newbeck and Winegar; corporals included Albro, Armistead, Le Hardy, McKenzie, Neck and Walton; Gerber and Lounds were the musicians. The company's roster was filled out by thirty-seven privates.<sup>41</sup>

It was explained that the guard would receive new equipment from the government in the near future and the discrepancies noted on the report would be taken care of. "Bayonet exercise, extended order drill and battle exercises, as well as firings, are being carefully learned now."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., May 13, 1904.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., July 29, 1904.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

The Gem City Guards, Company D, Second Regiment, sent forty-five men to training exercises at St. Augustine in September. While there, they were credited with preventing a race riot. Captain Calhoun and about half the company, with fixed bayonets, halted a mob in front of the post office and were successful in breaking up the demonstration.

In June of 1905, the Guards were practicing on their own range, Green's old pasture about a mile and a half west of the city; the land had been donated by the county commissioners and named Fearnside Range in honor of F. J. Fearnside, chairman of the commission. The Guards erected a bunker, a pit and a house on the range which was one hundred yards wide and six hundred yards long. The Guard received a great deal of favorable local support and notice until May, 1906, when Adjutant General J. Clifford R. Foster ordered the unit disbanded on May 1. Foster was somewhat ruffled when he appeared for an inspection and only twelve of the forty-nine men on the rolls made an appearance. He ordered it disbanded immediately. Other towns were interested in organizing a militia unit and the state could not afford more than it already had. Palatka was given sixty days to re-organize the company.<sup>43</sup>

Former Captain Calhoun declared that the real problem was that most employers refused to permit their employees to participate in guard functions, especially summer camp. So ended the Gem City Guards, founded as noted above, by William Husson in 1880. The unit served, domestically, during the Spanish American

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., May 4, 1906.

War with Huxson commanding, and subsequently was captained by Benjamin McLaury, C. J. Joseph, Robert W. Davis, Walter M. Davis, J. E. Lucas, H. M. de Montmolin, John D. Points, E. N. Calhoun and R. Raymond Price.<sup>44</sup>

Mayor Vickers ordered the streetlights turned off on August 1, 1904, because the Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company was violating an ordinance. The controversy arose when the company began to trim the trees which were rubbing the insulation from their wires and grounding them. A city ordinance prohibited "the mutilation of shade trees" and on Vickers' orders, the police forced the company to cease the cutting. The current was turned back on again on August 10, when the mayor was satisfied that the trees were being "trimmed" and not "mutilated."

The East Florida Savings and Trust Company of Palatka served as underwriter for Palatka's first sewer project in September by purchasing \$20,000.00 worth of bonds. A referendum election approved a total sale of \$35,000.00 in order to undertake the improvement.<sup>45</sup> The necessary funds were obtained and the firm of Guild and Company of Chattanooga was awarded the contract in February, 1905. The completion date was set as August 1.<sup>46</sup> The project deadline was not met however, due to inclement weather according to the Palatka News and Advertiser for September 13, 1905. The project was delayed until December for during that month Russell apologized for the streets being

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., September 2, 1904.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., February 3, 1905.

turned up because of the sewer project. Extensions to houses were being dug and then Palatka could look forward to having the streets torn up again to accommodate the new water system.<sup>47</sup>

Another boost to Palatka's economy was added the following week when the county commission accepted the bid of John Dallow to provide ferry service to East Palatka. The ferry, powered by steam, was to cost the commission two thousand six hundred and twenty-five dollars annually and would make four round trips per day, one at seven a.m.; ten a.m.; one p.m.; and four p.m. from Palatka. It left East Palatka one hour later. Docks were to be provided and maintained by the county.<sup>48</sup> By February 5, the new service, a cable and chain operation, was functioning.<sup>49</sup>

Fire struck again in October. A house across from the Saratoga Hotel burned to the ground. R. J. Adams said the structure was standing in 1856 when he came to Palatka. It was initially a boarding establishment and was later known as the St. Nicholas Hotel. It eventually became a part of the Putnam House, known as the "North Cottage," and Fay Templeton, the actress, was reported to have been born there.<sup>50</sup>

The Putnam House, Palatka's white elephant, was sold in December to L. H. and W. A. Merryday by the Florida Land Improvement Company for \$23,000.00.<sup>51</sup> The deal, arranged by

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., December 15, 1905.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., September 9, 1904.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., February 3, 1905.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., October 28, 1904.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., July 6, 1906.

Colonel W. H. de Bontecollin, was to culminate in the reopening of the hotel within forty-five days.<sup>52</sup> In April, 1905, the new owners publicized plans to construct eight brick stores on the lawn of the property facing Lemon Street.<sup>53</sup> In September, Oscar G. Barron, owner of the Putnam House for the five years after it was rebuilt following the great fire, visited Palatka and discussed operating the hotel for the Merrydays. The plans were for the hostelry to open on December 15, 1905. It didn't. Neither did Barron assume managerial responsibility. S. V. Warner of Binghamton, New York did however, and the hotel opened on January 2, 1906, for the first time in years.<sup>54</sup>

From January 2 to January 18, the Putnam House register showed that eighty-nine individuals patronized the hotel which could accommodate over five times that number. The register demonstrated two things: first, Palatka as a tourist resort was no longer an attraction; and second, the support for anything Palatkan was obvious. Fifty-three of the registrants were from out of town and thirty-six were residents of Palatka.<sup>55</sup>

Some of the Putnam House's difficulties could be attributed to the failure of the Palatka National Bank on July 17, 1893. It had a great investment in the hotel which went into the receivership of T. B. Merrill after the bank closed its doors. The hotel also played a role in local lumber deals,

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., December 2, 1904.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., April 21, 1905.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., January 19, 1906.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

being used as security for an enterprise involving a cypress stand on the Wekiwa river.<sup>56</sup>

The Georgia Southern and Florida Railway finally began construction of its new terminal in December, 1904. The contract for the new city hall and fire station was also let in December. P. J. Beas was the winner, bidding seven thousand four hundred and ninety dollars for completion of the structure. H. J. Kluth of Jacksonville was the architect and construction commenced immediately at Reid and Front Streets.<sup>57</sup>

The town of Mansfield was being platted in December. Purchased by the Southern Colonization Company of Chicago, it was located just west of Palatka on the old Hafer and Hodge tracts. B. F. Britchard was in Palatka drawing up final plans for the project.<sup>58</sup>

The county commission moved toward the construction of a new courthouse in February when it purchased the remainder of the block on which the present structure stands from William Ivers. In 1904 the commission bought a third of the property; it owned another third before that. The price paid was \$10,000.00.<sup>59</sup>

The old courthouse dated to 1855 when on February 5, Judge Bronson donated the land to the county commission. The commission at that time consisted of James Burt; Higginbotham; William

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., July 18, 1923.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., December 23, 1904.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., December 30, 1904.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., February 10, 1905.

Tumblin, the Judge of Probate; Reverend Silas Weeks; and Barnett Williams. On March 3, bids were called for in the Southern Sun and the bid of H. R. Blanchard for twenty-five hundred dollars was accepted. Ex-governor Moseley submitted a bid of twenty-six hundred dollars for construction of the building. Other bids were let for the plastering and plumbing work and three thousand dollars was borrowed from the State School and Seminary Fund to pay for the construction. Interest on the note was eight per cent.<sup>60</sup>

By August 10, 1855, the building was ready for painting. This job was successfully bid for by H. A. Baisden and T. R. Murray; their cost was one hundred and seventy-four dollars which included the cost of the paint. The work progressed rapidly and the first meeting was held in the new building on November 12, 1855. The structure had been altered once and repainted several times, but was in a poor state of condition.<sup>61</sup>

In April, plans for a new structure were being drawn by H. J. Klutho. By August however, the whole plan was scrapped. The commission decided a new courthouse would just have to wait. The old one was still good enough " . . . for another generation."<sup>62</sup>

The street railway came under fire by the town council in March, 1905. The owner, William P. Craig, who held the charter since its inception in 1888, petitioned to extend the road to

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1905.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., August 4, 1905.



Peniel and Mud Lake and electrify it. His reason was that he was " . . . operating at a loss."<sup>63</sup> The motion was made in council but died for the lack of a second.

In April, a new street railway ordinance was proposed. It was recommended that the track be expanded to standard gauge and that service be pushed to the Oak Hill Cemetery. The rates were to remain the same although "motor cars" would replace the mule drawn vehicle within six months. A thirty year franchise would be given Craig. The motion was laid over for future reference.<sup>64</sup>

Later in the year, in November, the city sued the street railway for not complying with the terms of the franchise. A legal confrontation, the first, centered about S. J. Hilburn and Robert W. Davis, former law partners. Hilburn represented the city and a lively exchange between the two occurred in court.

Editor Russell said, "The street railway is a shabby concern run on a mule basis. The best thing that can be said in its favor is that the owner has promised to give a modern and better service . . . ."<sup>65</sup>

Russell reported in December that the system might be replaced by an "auto line." He was pessimistic about the franchise being renewed, primarily because of Craig's opposition to some of the impositions levied by the council. The line would, he conjectured, be established when the streets were paved.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid., March 24, 1905.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., April 7, 1905.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., November 10, 1905.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., December 8, 1905.

Thus ended the Palatka and Heights Street Railway.

The racist attitude reappeared in July, 1905, when the Palatka and Heights Street Railway System complied with the "Jim Crow Law"; a mosquito net had been placed on the "observation cars." The whites would be seated in the front and a "thin wire screen" would compartmentalize the vehicle. Russell offered: ". . . now that the colored people have been granted a nice little screened compartment all by themselves, it is thought the business of the system among the colored people will be greatly increased."<sup>67</sup>

Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, wife of the President of the United States, visited Palatka with her three children in early April aboard the yacht "Sylph," Captain Evans, United States Navy commanding. The cruiser went upriver as far as Haw Creek, visiting Crescent City on the way. On the return trip, the "Sylph" stopped at Palatka and purchased food and ice at Gay's Food Store.<sup>68</sup>

On the political scene, 1905 introduced a movement that culminated in a referendum election dealing with the prohibition issue. Prohibition was pushed hard by Russell of the Palatka News and Advertiser beginning in July, 1906, when he printed a column written by the Women's Christian Temperance Union. Early in July the local temperance union presented a petition to the county commission, but that body refused to

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., July 14, 1905.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., April 7, 1905.

commit itself on the issue.<sup>69</sup>

The Advertiser reported in August that the liquor interests were organizing so as to keep the county wet by a system of licensing, a much needed control as might be suspected. Eight hundred petitioners supporting a referendum prompted the dealers to do so; this was two hundred more than was necessary to instigate an election.<sup>70</sup>

Putnam County had six bars in 1905. They paid a total of fifteen hundred dollars in license fees. Russell declared that this traffic in liquor " . . . increased court costs"; that it " . . . drained revenues"; and " . . . increased taxes."<sup>71</sup> The idea was presented that prohibition would benefit the Negro for he could then afford to pay his poll tax.<sup>72</sup>

It was not determined how many Negroes had paid their poll taxes, but the prohibition referendum lost anyway by a county-wide vote of five hundred and fifty-four to four hundred and ninety-one.<sup>73</sup> Less than two-thirds of the registered voters bothered to express their opinions.

Communities in the county voting "dry" were Bannerville, Bostwick, Como, Crescent City, Francis, Monroe's Mill, Pomona and Welaka. An even vote was recorded in Hollister.

Those communities inclined to retain the sale of liquor

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., July 7, 1905.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., August 11, 1905.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., September 3, 1905.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., September 15, 1905.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., September 29, 1905.

were Baldwin, East Palatka, Federal Point, Florahome, Interlachen, Morwalk, Palatka (all seven precincts), Palatka Heights, and Satsuma Heights.<sup>74</sup>

A Palatka landmark changed hands in September. The City Drug Store, founded in the early 1860's by Doctor W. H. Moragne, then passing respectively to Moragne and Kersting, R. Kersting, L. C. Carova and Brother, and to Harry E. Stewart in 1893, was sold to J. H. Houghton during the first week in September.<sup>75</sup>

Complaints arose regarding the town's water supply in October. The controversy witnessed the final blow when the Palatka Water Works Company, owned by a group of Boston investors, refused to sell its operation to the city for \$55,000.00. This instigated the independents to push for a \$60,000.00 bond issue to build a publicly owned system. The bonds were sold in October.<sup>76</sup>

Roads in Putnam County emerged as an issue in October as well. Only rarely did any motorized vehicle frequent Palatka and when this occasion did arise, it was almost cause for celebration. Such was the case when G. M. Huston of Chicago entered Palatka on October 24 in a steamer, en route to Ormond. Huston stayed overnight at the Saratoga Hotel. His machine prompted curiosity and the headline read "The Chug-Chug Draws A Crowd."<sup>77</sup> The event was a "big one" according to Russell, the

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., September 8, 1905.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., October 6, 1905.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1905.

reason for which was " . . . the bad roads which stretch in every direction from Palatka."<sup>78</sup>

Editor Russell supported a new temperance drive in his January 5, 1906, issue by resuming publication of a Women's Christian Temperance Union column in the paper. By August, the mood for prohibition increased to the extent that a drunk, if arrested, could expect to pay a three dollar fine or put " . . . thirty days on the streets."<sup>79</sup> The saloon-keepers of Palatka were engaged in a "Fight for Life" by June, 1907. They instituted an opposition campaign to keep the county "wet." One of the owners was circulating a handbill supporting their cause.<sup>80</sup>

A second referendum was called for September 30 to decide the issue. The Palatka News and Advertiser reported on October 4, 1907, that Putnam County was now legally dry. A majority of two hundred and fifty-four votes carried the issue for the prohibitionists.

The only precincts favoring the status quo were East Palatka, Federal Point, Georgetown, Interlachen and Wards Six and Seven in Palatka.<sup>81</sup>

The sale of alcoholic beverages was banned immediately. Russell reported, overstating the question somewhat, that the barmen were " . . . not leaving altogether." Thomas H. Ray remained, but turned to the dispensing of ice cream. Louis

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., August 17, 1906.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., June 14, 1907.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., October 4, 1907.

Bohlen moved to Jacksonville. Captain J. F. Brewer was ill, and " . . . say go elsewhere." T. H. Keating sold his building to W. G. Tilghman for \$10,000.00 and went to Ocala. J. O. Ringham left for " . . . the far west." Charles Smith went east to St. Augustine. <sup>82</sup>

Sheriff Howell must have been impressed with the effect of the election when, in October, he was "kept busy" chasing the "Blind Tigers" (stills) that appeared throughout the county. <sup>83</sup>

Another Palatka pioneer died on January 30, 1906. Judge James Burt, who'd come to Palatka in 1852 as receiver for a mercantile house, had been more than instrumental in the town's development.

He'd served as one of the executors of the old Palatka Tract along with Judges Bronson and William Forward, and then as a county commissioner from 1855 to 1857. He held the position of postmaster from November 11, 1859, to January 10, 1861. Shortly after this, he was elected Judge of Probate Court, serving in that capacity until 1866 when he moved to the bench as Judge of Criminal Court for Putnam County. He was credited with surveying Palatka Heights and worked for its incorporation on July 23, 1886. <sup>84</sup> & <sup>85</sup> He'd also laid out Newtown, primarily for

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., November 22, 1907.

<sup>84</sup> Florida, Public Works Administration, List of Municipal Corporations in Florida (Revised) (Jacksonville, 1941), p. 63.

<sup>85</sup> Palatka Heights existed as a political entity until January 27, 1924, when it was annexed to the City of Palatka.

the Negro community. In 1884 he moved to the Heights where he had a large orange grove.<sup>86</sup>

A water system, a new courthouse and paved streets next attracted the attention of the politicians. Back in December, 1905, the city council purchased the property of Alex Holmes (block number two hundred and fifty-nine) for use as a site for a water plant. It had pushed the Palatka Water Works, owned by a Boston firm, into a suit in August, 1903, to force that company to lower its rates. In January, 1906, the council passed an ordinance regulating the rates and reducing them by thirty-seven per cent. The water company sought an injunction restraining Palatka from calling for bids on a municipally owned system. The request was denied, but not before Mr. Russell said, "The BOSTON company has its nerve."<sup>87</sup>

In the meantime, new water mains were being installed by the water works company. These were being tested by City Engineer Lyon in June, 1907, and were subjected to one hundred and fifty pounds of pressure. Seven of the pipes blew but Lyon said that only rarely would the pressure exceed eighty pounds.<sup>88</sup>

H. Mervin, drilling wells for the new municipal water works, struck water in March at a level of one hundred and forty-four feet, ". . . clear as crystal, sweet of taste, and soft . . . ." The well provided 230,000 gallons per day.<sup>89</sup> Three days later,

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<sup>86</sup>Times Herald, February 8, 1907.

<sup>87</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, January 19, 1906.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., June 28, 1907.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., March 13, 1908.

on March 16, another well was brought in providing nearly the same flow from a depth of two hundred and fifty-four feet. The pressure was sufficient enough to raise a stream of water through firehoses, over the flagstaff on the Putnam House.<sup>90</sup>

The system received its first real test the next month when the Baptist Church caught fire. Although there was a fire hydrant immediately in front of the church, the stream of water would not reach the eaves of the structure. It would, in fact, just reach the roof of the parsonage next door. The Daily News and Advertiser attributed the lack of pressure to the Palatka Water Works Company.<sup>91</sup>

The firm became embroiled in yet another controversy in November. It sued the Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company for tapping the water mains so as to use illegally (alleged) obtained water to cool the machinery at the gas plant.<sup>92</sup>

The death sentence of the Palatka Water Works Company was handed down on October 20, 1908, when the council declared the contract with the company "null and void." The reason offered by the city fathers was that the company failed to provide sufficient water pressure in the system which resulted in the loss of ". . . many buildings . . . destroyed by fire which might otherwise have been saved."<sup>93</sup> As a result the city was forced into having to construct its own system and also refused

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., March 20, 1908.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., April 24, 1908.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., November 6, 1908.

<sup>93</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," October 20, 1908, p. 52.



to pay rental fees to the company for the fire hydrants from April 1 to September 30, 1908.<sup>94</sup>

Palatka hired its first Superintendent of the Water Works on December 1, 1908. N. S. Collins was given a salary of seventy-five dollars per month. In August, 1909, the water company sued Palatka for non-payment of the hydrant rental fee of four thousand nine hundred dollars.<sup>95</sup> City Attorney Strunz was assisted by S. J. Hilburn, hired for five hundred dollars, to argue the case all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary.<sup>96</sup> The Board of Trade recommended the city purchase the waterworks in April and the following month, the council asked for an "enabling act" authorizing a \$50,000.00 bond issue so as to purchase the works.<sup>97</sup>

W. Chamberlain and Company, an architectural firm in Birmingham, Alabama, was awarded a contract by the county commissioners in March, 1906, to draw plans for a new courthouse costing about \$40,000.00.<sup>98</sup>

Again the proposed undertaking was postponed for two years for the lack of funds. It appeared that no money could be derived from any source other than a bond issue which the commission called for in November.

The Board of Trade assumed the initiative by recommending

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

<sup>97</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, May 7, 1909.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., March, 9, 1906.

a bond issue totaling \$190,000.00 to be used for county improvements. Nearly half the funds, \$100,000.00, would be used for hard surfaced roads. The courthouse project was given \$35,000.00. The remainder would be used for two bridges, one over the St. Johns costing \$25,000.00 and one over Dunn's Creek costing \$10,000.00.<sup>99</sup>

The electors approved the sale of \$190,000.00 in bonds by a vote of nine hundred and fifty-one to five hundred and sixty-three. The opposition found strength primarily in the outlying areas of the county.<sup>100</sup> The areas opposing the issue were in the west and southeast of the county. The northeast sections voted in favor of the bridges which were the real issue.

More delay ensued when Judge E. Noble Calhoun ruled that the bonds had to be validated by the state legislature.<sup>101</sup> This was realized in June, 1909, when House Bill Number 597 approved the bonding issue held the previous November.

A Chicago firm, Woodin, McNear and Moore, purchased the bonds in July, and in October the contract for the courthouse was let to C. D. Smith of Albany, Georgia for \$34,606.00. The original architects were passed over in favor of the firm of Robinson and Reidy and work commenced immediately. The cornerstone was laid in ceremonies on December 2, 1909, conducted by the Masons, the Grand Lodge of F. & A. M. of Florida which

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid., September 4, 1908.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., November 6, 1908.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., February 5, 1909.

would use the northeast corner of the building for office space.<sup>102</sup>

It rained on December 2, but five thousand persons turned out to witness the ceremony which was conducted by Senior Past Grand Master James Cornell of Ormond. The first floor of the building had been completed and was covered with a platform on which was erected a stage. Placed in the cornerstone was a sealed copper box containing the November 26, 1909 issues of the Palatka News and Advertiser and the Palatka Times-Herald. Also in the box was the Fraternal Record for November, 1909, and a banquet menu card. Other items were: a ceremonial program; the Lodge membership rolls; a 1909 Lincoln penny; a 1909 half dollar; a picture of Palatka in 1884; a picture of the city hall and two street scenes; and a 1909 city directory.<sup>103</sup>

Following the ceremonies, a banquet, catered by Louis Kalbfield, was held at the Palatka Athletic Club.<sup>104</sup>

Satisfied in this endeavor, the Board of Trade pushed another civic improvement, this time for paved streets. In June, 1907, it recommended that "Lemon and other downtown streets . . . ." should be paved with brick.<sup>105</sup> In addition, ten to twelve miles of residential streets needed paving with Interlachen gravel. The citizenry had already pledged over seven thousand dollars to inaugurate the project and George T. Selden requested the county commission to transfer five thousand

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<sup>102</sup>Ibid., December 3, 1909.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., June 21, 1907.

dollars from the "fine and forfeiture fund" to the new account.

The council sold \$15,000.00 in bonds in July to be used for paving the streets.<sup>106</sup> Bids were called for and that of the Graves Shale Paving Brick Company of Atlanta was accepted in December.<sup>107</sup> Lemon and Water Streets were paved with vitrified brick at a cost of one dollar and fifty-four cents per square yard. The curbs and gutters cost forty cents per linear foot for granite and fifty-nine cents per linear foot for a concrete and steel installation.<sup>108</sup>

The work commenced within sixty days. By the middle of February Lemon had been lined with granite curb and gutter for a block east of the Atlantic Coast Line crossing and the paving had begun.<sup>109</sup>

Now that Palatka had a paved street for the first time, the novelty proved most appealing. In April Mayor Howell A. Davis recommended the construction of sidewalks on Lemon after the paving was completed. He also wanted a new paved street to extend from Lemon to the New Union Depot, a distance of two blocks.<sup>110</sup>

The council was instilled with the spirit and ordered the paving of twenty-three city blocks. Front would be paved from Laurel to Madison, a distance of four blocks. Third Street

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<sup>106</sup>Ibid., July 26, 1907.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., December 6, 1907.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., February 14, 1908.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., April 24, 1908.

was to be paved for eight blocks all the way to the Georgia Southern and Florida Depot. Fourth, Fifth, Eleventh and Reid, from Water to Fifth, would also be paved at a total cost of \$12,000.00.<sup>111</sup>

The paving fever swept the city like wildfire; now the residents who lived on streets for which paving was not planned protested to the council.<sup>112</sup> In June it was determined to construct more sidewalks, but of wood, so as to be able to afford more of them. In addition, a movement favoring macadam streets began because they were less expensive than brick and more streets could then be paved.

There were instances in which some citizens paved the streets themselves. W. A. Walton was given permission to fill Kirkland Street in front of his home with Interlachen gravel.<sup>113</sup> The Merrydays requested permission to grade part of Reid and Water Streets at their expense.<sup>114</sup> They got it.

A committee of three was sent to Gainesville, Jacksonville, Orlando, Savannah, Valdosta and Waycross to investigate the cost of street paving at those places. One councilman, one member of the Board of Trade and one member of the Board of Bond Trustees comprised the committee.<sup>115</sup>

After a poll of the leading citizens it was decided to

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid., May 8, 1908.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1908.

<sup>113</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 13.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

sacrifice the brick paving on Third Street so as to construct more sidewalks. According to one account, "One large property owner who was present is said to have fainted when the council gave a unanimous vote for the order."<sup>116</sup> The idea behind this was that the property owners would financially undertake this project themselves.<sup>117 & 118</sup> The council clerk, A. T. Tracy, ordered that the walks be constructed either of " . . . granolithic or cement, all to be three inches thick . . . ." <sup>119</sup>

As the street program progressed it forced another issue to the surface, namely that of buildings which were actually in part encroaching on the right of way of the street. In September the owners involved were given five days to move them back. Despite the rather stringent demand, there was no opposition. "The people of the city are beginning to take a pride in Lemon street's appearance now . . . ." <sup>120</sup>

There was little compliance with the order within the time specified; Miss Kate Lucas was just cutting off the fronts of the stores on her property west of Fourth on Lemon a month later. The Putnam Pharmacy also had to be moved before the sidewalks could be laid. <sup>121</sup>

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<sup>116</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, July 10, 1908.

<sup>117</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 21.

<sup>118</sup>The paper printed this information as noted. The information obtained from the minutes was dated June 16, 1908, and referred to owners on Water, Oak and Eleventh as constructing their own sidewalks.

<sup>119</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, July 10, 1908.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., September 18, 1908.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid., October 16, 1908.

Finally the case for sidewalks reached a climax. In October an ordinance was passed providing for sidewalks for fifty-six city blocks. A storm of protest arose from the property owners and leading businessmen stating that it was impossible to pay for them. Alderman P. D. Mattles introduced a nullifying ordinance.<sup>122</sup>

A year later, Palatka boasted twelve miles of concrete sidewalks from five to ten feet wide and nineteen blocks of vitrified brick paving, one-third of which was paid directly by the property owners.<sup>123</sup>

Pictures in the local papers were rare things. One of interest appeared in the December 24, 1909, issue of the Palatka News and Advertiser; it was taken on Lemon Street looking west. The caption beneath the photograph noted that the paving of Lemon was complete, but there was not one automobile on the road.<sup>124</sup>

Palatka's educational system was financially supported by the city fathers. In June, 1906, the largest class ever to graduate completed the most successful term the system had; four students graduated from the high school while the grammar school graduated nineteen.<sup>125</sup>

Railroad development continued, although at a somewhat

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., October 30, 1908.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., October 1, 1909.

<sup>124</sup>Palatka's first automobile reputedly belonged to Henry P. Nerwin, but when it was purchased is not known. Palatka Daily News, May 19, 1953.

<sup>125</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, June 1, 1906.

slowly, and much of this was instigated by the citizens who were developing a community feeling for Palatka. The Street Railway Commission requested the Atlantic Coast Line to construct a new depot in town. A deadline of October 10, 1906, was made and the line had to present its reasons for not complying in Tallahassee by that time.<sup>126</sup>

The railroad couldn't show cause why not. General Superintendent Ford announced on November 12 that plans were made for a new depot that would cost \$15,000.00.<sup>127</sup>

In October the Georgia Southern and Florida inaugurated Pullman service to Palatka from Atlanta. The Water Street Depot was the center of operations in Palatka for this line.<sup>128</sup>

The new Union Depot was started in March, 1907. Workmen began tearing down all old shacks in the vicinity of the structure. The building was completed a little over a year later at a total cost of \$25,000.00.<sup>129</sup>

A new railroad initiated steps to build to Palatka in September, 1907. The Ocala Northern, owned by E. P. Rentz, purchased the right of way from Palatka to Fort McCoy and an old railroad which extended from Silver Springs to Ocala. When these two lines were connected service between Palatka and Ocala would exist.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., September 28, 1906.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., November 16, 1906.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., October 19, 1906.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., February 14, 1908.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., September 20, 1907.



Osceola County was pushing its development as well; after a bad start in November, 1906, when nine prisoners broke out of the jail by digging through the brick wall without a trace, the year closed on a more positive note. In the same month the commissioners purchased a "road machine and roller" for twenty-five hundred dollars. They also purchased twenty acres of "Interlachen clay and gravel land."<sup>131</sup>

Three men from Interlachen, Rodding, Wimberly and Wylie, recommended to the commissioners in August, 1906, that a road be built between that place and Interlachen. Shortly after this, a Good Roads Committee was established at a meeting of nearly forty interested persons at the courthouse. They supported the Interlachen-Palatka road in particular and roads in general. By November, two miles of the road had been completed at Interlachen.<sup>132</sup> Funding had been subscribed by contributions to the extent of five hundred dollars per mile. The total cost per mile was six to seven hundred dollars.<sup>133</sup> In July, 1907, the Rodman Lumber Company offered eight thousand dollars to partly underwrite the link. Palatka contributed in January of the following year by ordering an extension of Kirby Street, south of Osceola, to connect with the new thoroughfare. This portion was constructed of "Georgia cement rock and Interlachen gravel."<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup>Ibid., November 16, 1906.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., January 25, 1907.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid., January 22, 1909.

The commission approved construction of a steel bridge across the Creek in 1906. This action spurred a bridge building fever which culminated with a structure spanning the St. Johns. A resolution was passed by the commissioners in August, 1907, to bridge the river. County Surveyor R. Raymond Price felt the best location for it would be from Hogeye Point on the west bank, a mile below the Florida East Coast Railroad Bridge, across to East Palatka. The river at this point, according to Price, was three thousand one hundred and eighty-seven feet wide. A cost of \$60,000.00 was anticipated but much "Hastings business" would be attracted from St. Augustine once the structure was completed.<sup>135</sup>

A week later a call for bids was issued. The bid accepted by the commission in October was that of the Converse Bridge Company of Chattanooga, Tennessee. The \$54,000.00 was to be paid in eight installments of six thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars each. The completion date was projected for October 1, 1908. A vote of three to two gave Converse the bid. Martin Griffin, who owned property at the foot of Lemon Street, pledged to donate the footing for the bridge, location of which had as yet to be determined.

Converse stated in February, 1908, that it couldn't build the bridge for that price. The work had as yet to begin. Part of the reason was the financial panic which struck the country in that year, but by May, negotiations between Converse and northern financial houses were under way and K. C. Walcott of

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<sup>135</sup>Ibid., August 16, 1907.

the bridge firm advised Palatka that he was optimistic.<sup>136</sup> (The panic affected Palatka in more direct ways. The Selden Cypress Door Company cut its work day to eight hours and laid off half its labor force. The Wilson Company reduced its work day to six hours.)

It was decided in December that the bridge would be located at the foot of Laurel Street. A public hearing was scheduled for the twenty-first to allow opposition arguments to be heard.

All this speculation spurred the development of East Palatka. G. W. Deen of the Deen Realty and Improvement Company of Waycross, Georgia, felt the place would attract farmers as residents. His company was seriously considering the development especially because of the proposed bridge. In East Palatka Heights, the area from the river to the Florida East Coast Depot, streets were being laid out and graded.<sup>137</sup>

Converse was ready to commence work in June, 1909, after the bond issue for \$190,000.00 had been validated by the legislature. The first piling were driven on September 16 under the direction of R. F. Ensey, the civil engineer in charge.<sup>138</sup>

Much of Palatka was destroyed by fire for the two years subsequent to 1907. This was not one massive disaster such as the 1884 blaze, but a sporadic eating away of the town's business and industrial district. At eleven o'clock on the evening

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<sup>136</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1908.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., March 19, 1909.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., September 17, 1909.

of March 14, 1907, the G. M. Davis Cypress Tank Company burned to the ground. It had been operating in Palatka for twenty years, initially a subsidiary of the Wilson Cypress Company, but later owned by Howell A. Davis. Insured for \$15,000.00, the total loss was estimated at \$50,000.00.<sup>139</sup> The cause of the fire was not determined. Davis began rebuilding immediately on Laurel Street, across from the Georgia Southern and Florida track.<sup>140</sup>

The rash continued in April when the steamer "Fearless" of the Cone Line, serving Palatka and Federal Point, burned at Collee on the twenty-ninth.<sup>141</sup>

Ten months elapsed before Palatka experienced another blaze, this one attributed to an "incendiary." Three attempts were made on the Tilghman Mill during February; early in the month \$19,000.00 worth of drying kilns and lumber were destroyed. On the twenty-sixth the planing mill burned at a cost of three thousand dollars and the next night the office was seen to be on fire but it was discovered in time to arrest it before much damage was done. Oil was used to ignite the fire. G. Loper Bailey, owner of the Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company which adjoined the Tilghman mill, offered a reward of one hundred dollars for the capture of the person or persons responsible.<sup>142</sup>

As noted above, the Baptist Church was completely destroyed by fire. This loss was not a work of arson; the cause was

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<sup>139</sup>Ibid., March 22, 1907.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., May 10, 1907.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid., May 3, 1907.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., February 28, 1908.

blamed on the stack of the ice factory from which sparks ignited the church. The building dated to 1870. It was dedicated in 1872 and expanded in 1895.<sup>143</sup> A new site was purchased in May at the corner of Oak and Fifth Streets.

The mayor called for the installation of spark arrestors on chimneys, but this action was not realized.<sup>144</sup>

Another blaze struck in October. The Preston-Miller Warehouse on the river front was completely destroyed. The fire was suspected to be caused by a spark from the steamer "Mayhaw."<sup>145</sup>

The Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company was destroyed by a fire on the afternoon of Saturday, April 3, 1909. Bailey, the owner, ordered new equipment immediately. No cause for the fire was given.<sup>146</sup>

An explosion rocked the town on November 11 at 4:45 p.m. When the boilers at the gas plant blew up, two workers, Walter Croomer and Marshall Smith, were killed and windows in the Presbyterian Church were shattered. No cause was given for the disaster. The system had undergone inspection only several weeks before and was declared to be "sound."<sup>147</sup>

The appearance of the town changed considerably during the last years of the decade. Part of the old Graham Hotel property

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., April 24, 1908.

<sup>144</sup> In this message, the same in which he called for the street extension to the new Union Depot, the mayor urged the residents of Palatka to install numbers on their houses so mail delivery could begin.

<sup>145</sup> Palatka News and Advertiser, October 23, 1908.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., April 9, 1909.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., November 12, 1909.

was purchased in March 1907, by R. C. Howell and leased to Louis Kalbfield for an opera house.<sup>148</sup> It was named the Howell Theatre in August and was due to open in September, seating, segregating, six hundred and fifty persons. It had separate ticket offices, and the gallery was reserved for Negroes.<sup>149</sup>

A second attempt to bring culture to Palatka failed when a plea by Miss Ida Leib to offer music in the school system received no response.<sup>150</sup>

A hospital was proposed by the Board of Trade in July. It was disclosed that a fund for such a service had been started in 1892 at a social held in the Putnam House.<sup>151</sup> One thousand dollars had been raised and deposited in a bank by Mrs. Cato, Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. Moore. The interest accumulated increased the fund by eight hundred thirty-two dollars and twenty-two cents.<sup>152</sup>

Trustees of the Palatka City Hospital Fund were Doctor George E. Welch, Chairman; D. W. Ramsaur, a druggist; and representatives from five white churches. The hospital was to open in sixty days in the old Dunn residence on the corner of Emmett and Kirkland Streets.<sup>153</sup> The story was the same in December; this time only fifteen days were supposed to elapse

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<sup>148</sup>Ibid., March 10, 1907.

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., August 2, 1907.

<sup>150</sup>Ibid., November 6, 1908.

<sup>151</sup>Ibid., July 5, 1907.

<sup>152</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1908.

<sup>153</sup>Ibid.

before it opened. Mrs. E. N. Williams was in charge of the hospital which would be staffed by graduate nurses. No arrangements had been made for charity patients.<sup>154</sup>

A swimming pool was constructed just north of the Saratoga Hotel and was fed by water from a "sulfur well" two hundred and fifteen feet deep.<sup>155</sup>

Optimism increased when an ordinance was presented by the council giving the American Trackless Trolley and Electric Light and Power Company a thirty year franchise to provide public transportation. The fare was not to exceed five cents; the proposal fell through however.<sup>156</sup>

A new lumber company indicated it would locate in Palatka in August. The A. T. Squier Mills leased the old Georgia Southern and Florida dock, three hundred and twenty feet in length, and began construction of a sawmill at the north end. It had a ten year lease on the property and intended to harvest timber near Haw Creek on the Deen timberlands, some thirty thousand acres in area. The mill itself was to have a capacity of thirty-five thousand feet daily.<sup>157</sup> The plant neared completion in February, 1909. A new pier, two hundred feet long, and a kiln, thirty by eighty-eight feet, were erected. Fifty to sixty employees would man the operation.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>Ibid., December 3, 1909.

<sup>155</sup>Ibid., May 15, 1908.

<sup>156</sup>Ibid., May 22, 1908.

<sup>157</sup>Ibid., August 2, 1908.

<sup>158</sup>Ibid., February 19, 1909.

Charles Kupperbusch started construction of a three story brick hotel at Lemon and Third Streets in June; it opened in August, having thirty-nine rooms.<sup>159</sup>

A Palatka landmark gave way to progress in June when the old Calhoun building was torn down. Built in 1880 by Benjamin P. Calhoun, the structure housed the Haughton Grocery, C. F. Sulzner's Music Store, A. F. Vogelbach's Drugs, Lowry and Hult Drugs, Menis Peterman and the McLarty Brothers Dry Goods Store. The last occupant was the H. M. Fearnside Clothing Company.<sup>160</sup>

A "much needed" industry came to Palatka in June when L. H. Buck of Tampa decided to build a steam laundry on the site of the old Reid Street hospital.<sup>161</sup>

The "No-Hat Club" was organized in July. Any member caught wearing a hat after dark would be subject to a "heavy fine." Its motto was, "We bar sky pieces after dark." The club elected Walter McNally as the Grand Exalted Boozham of Boozerow; N. H. Moragne was the Exalted Tobyvitch of Sniperiono; and the Great Stumperunnie was H. M. Fearnside.<sup>162</sup>

The Board of Trade summed up its first year's efforts and could point to the record with pride. It had a hand in getting nearly every civic improvement started although a number of goals were not realized in any sense. These included a municipal dock; dredging of the river; a cross state canal; and free delivery of

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., August 27, 1909.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., June 4, 1909.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., July 17, 1908.



mail. The letter depended on when the streets were marked and the house were numbered. It also requested a new government building in Palatka but nothing had been decided regarding that.<sup>163</sup> There was no question that this group was the motivating force behind most of the city and county developments.

Palatka rested on its laurels achieved in 1908. Confident, perhaps satisfied that enough had been done and that because everything, being new, would require no maintenance, they did away with the position of city engineer effective January 1, 1909.<sup>164</sup>

Political activity and dissatisfaction dominated 1909. Early in January the Palatka News and Advertiser noted the sale of \$50,000.00 in redemption bonds to the East Florida Savings and Trust Company of Palatka. The sale was necessary to cover a 1902 sale of redemption bonds for the same amount. Editor Russell glowed:

. . . it is a blessed good thing that Palatka has this East Florida Savings and Trust to take up these bonds. Otherwise the city would be in the position of not being able to cash them until the money for the redemption bonds is received.<sup>165</sup>

Actually, the bank was interested in something more appealing than glowing words. The council decided, because it had no prospect of disposing of the bonds by January 1, 1909, to entice their sale with a fee of two and one-half per cent, twelve

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<sup>163</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1908.

<sup>164</sup>Ibid., November 20, 1908.

<sup>165</sup>Ibid., January 8, 1909.

hundred and fifty dollars.<sup>166</sup>

Police Chief P. H. Hagan resigned in February to take a position as deputy in the county sheriff's department. He had been chief for eleven years, replacing a man named Trueman.<sup>167</sup>

R. A. Varnes succeeded Hagan on April 13.<sup>168</sup>

Russell wrote an editorial in April supporting the city commission form of government for Palatka.<sup>169</sup> This introduced an idea that would be a topic of discussion for over a decade before any decision would be made. His theme was that there were too many politicians in the government, supporting this by noting the existence of a mayor and fourteen councilmen representing seven wards. In addition, five bond trustees, the city clerk, tax assessor, and the treasurer were all elected.<sup>170</sup>

Mayor Howell A. Davis was re-elected in April of 1909. In his inaugural address to the council he suggested depositing city funds in a bank so that interest would be earned on them. This interest, a minimum of two per cent, could be used as a sinking fund for bond issues. He also recommended the bonding of the superintendent of the waterworks, and that the city be surveyed. Permanent monuments should be erected on every third or fourth block and the street right of way should be defined. To top off his program, he suggested drawing a new city map.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>166</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 77.

<sup>167</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, February 19, 1909.

<sup>168</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 105.

<sup>169</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, April 2, 1909.

<sup>170</sup>Ibid.

<sup>171</sup>Ibid., April 16, 1909.

In county affairs, the grand jury, Alexander D. Curry, Foreman, presented to the commission in April a decision protesting the choice of a poor farm. The commissioners had selected Mallet's Island near Florahome as the site. The jury stated:

We know the reputation of the place for health has always been bad . . . . We believe Mallet's Island from any and every viewpoint to be the most UNFIT PLACE that could have been selected in Putnam County for a poor farm.<sup>172</sup>

The commission grasped the tone with which the jury had presented its recommendation and the following month it backed out of the poorhouse business, however reluctantly, by offering several reasons for doing so. There had been no applicants for admission; there had been too much protest against the proposal; there were crops planted and as soon as these were harvested it would dispose of the plan. The county paid thirteen hundred dollars for the land in January, 1909.<sup>173</sup>

J. N. Blackwell, president of the school board, recommended that a new school be built.<sup>174</sup> He suggested using the Howell Theatre as an auditorium, obviously to hold down the cost of the structure. The old building was in need of extensive repairs. Professor I. I. Himes asked for twenty-five dollars per month for school expenses back in September, 1908. He indicated repairs were necessary then.<sup>175</sup> He returned on October 6 and again on

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<sup>172</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1909.

<sup>173</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1909.

<sup>174</sup>Ibid., May 28, 1909.

<sup>175</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 43.

November 4 for funds for necessary equipment. One request was for " . . . three stoves and stovepipes";<sup>176</sup> the good professor was probably somewhat cool. The principal of school Number Two, the Negro school, appeared before the council in November also, requesting that " . . . many needed repairs to the school" be made.<sup>177</sup> These were taken care of, according to the Property Committee, on January 5, 1909.<sup>178</sup>

Editor Russell plugged the campaign to change the governmental structure again in June by decrying class hatred, stating it " . . . was fatal to democracy. Democracy means equality of opportunity and respect for men as men."<sup>179</sup> Whatever he had in mind, he didn't pursue the idea any further.

The year 1909 brought the automobile to Palatka on a broad scale. It was announced in the Palatka News and Advertiser on September 17 that A. T. Anderson would open a Rambler agency at 216 Lemon Street in the Merryday block.

The first automobile advertisement appeared on October 15; the Gainesville Motor Car Company was advising of its handling the Studebaker line.<sup>180</sup>

Another auto agency, the Palatka Automotive and Supply Company, opened in late October. J. T. Barnett was president and the firm handled the Maxwell and Mitchell products.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>176</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>177</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>178</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>179</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, June 4, 1909.

<sup>180</sup>Ibid., October 15, 1909.

<sup>181</sup>Ibid., October 29, 1909.

By December a third dealer was in business; C. W. Hill opened a Studebaker agency.<sup>182</sup>

Prohibition came under attack in October. The former tavern owners, led by Thomas H. Keating, submitted a petition for another referendum election to the county commission but were turned down flat by Chairman Stephens and Commissioner Solana who said the names on the petition were forged.<sup>183</sup>

Keating went into court requesting a mandamus order for an election, but Judge J. T. Wills denied this in Starke.<sup>184</sup> Keating then returned to the drugery of getting up another petition. Editor Russell indicated his equality philosophy was a thing of the past, if he'd ever had one, when he revealed that three-quarters of the names on the initial petition were those of "irresponsible negroes."<sup>185</sup> Keating, undaunted, was betting a thousand dollars that he'd have a thousand names in two weeks.<sup>186</sup>

If there were any takers, he lost the bet. The new petition was checked for validity by E. Noble Calhoun and with his verification it was submitted to the county commission. The support given the movement caused a great deal of concern for some; nine of the larger firms in Palatka and vicinity protested that the whisky petition " . . . was detrimental to their

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<sup>182</sup>Ibid., December 17, 1909.

<sup>183</sup>Ibid., October 15, 1909.

<sup>184</sup>Ibid., November 5, 1909.

<sup>185</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1909.

<sup>186</sup>Ibid.

businesses."<sup>187</sup> The line were: Browning Lumber Company; G. M. Davis and Son; G. O. Porter and Company; Rodman Lumber Company; Selden Cypress Door Company; Squier Lumber Company; Stanton Foundry and Machinery; N. J. Tilghman and Sons and the Wilson Cypress Company.

They were successful. The petition was turned down once again, this time for being thirty-eight signatures shy of the seven hundred and thirteen required. A petition needed twenty-five per cent of the registered voter's (numbering two thousand eight hundred and fifty-five) signatures.<sup>188</sup>

A spirit of celebration pervaded Palatka as January drew to a close. Preparations were being made for the official opening of the new St. Johns River Bridge on the twenty-fifth. Funds totalling \$327.50 were subscribed to cover the cost of the festivities which included a "grand barbecue" sponsored by the Board of Trade.

Other items of attraction were: Johnny J. Jones' famous Italian Band provided the music; the Palatka News and Advertiser published a special edition; George Selden, the president of the Board, was the Master of Ceremonies held at the Women's Club Park on the river bank; Senator S. J. Hilburn was the featured speaker; Miss Whiteside's five passenger Buick runabout was all decked out in white chrysanthemums; there were twelve hundred feet of tables on which were served seven beefs, six sheep, six hogs, barrels of coffee and piles of bread. A parade

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<sup>187</sup>Ibid., January 14, 1910.

<sup>188</sup>Ibid., January 21, 1910.

highlighted the ceremonies when it crossed the bridge at eleven o'clock the morning.

It was the largest hometown crowd in old Putnam for forty years. I was an "orderly crowd." It was a "sober crowd."<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> ibid., January 25, 1910.

## CHAPTER XVI. THE PEOPLE

The rates for the new bridge were established by the county commission. A pedestrian or cyclist had to pay five cents for a single crossing although a book of one hundred tickets could be purchased for one dollar and seventy-five cents. This book of tickets could be used for any type of vehicle, a higher number of tickets being assessed according to the size of the vehicle. A car and driver cost five ducats, a horse drawn wagon with a driver paid four. Annual automobile tickets could be purchased for ten dollars.<sup>1</sup>

Other bridge projects in the area included the opening of the sixty foot steel structure at Banana Mills across Etonish Creek in March and the planning for the construction of a bridge across Dunn's Creek.<sup>2</sup>

One of the first automobile tours to cross the new St. Johns River bridge occurred in March when three Palatkens drove to St. Augustine. Leslie Whiteside led the entourage in his Buick Model Ten runabout. He was accompanied by Elmer Collins, who drove a Buick Model Seventeen, and F. H. Wilson in his Rambler Model Fifty-three.<sup>3</sup>

Streets continued to be an issue, emerging again on the

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<sup>1</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, January 28, 1910.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., April 1, 1910.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., March 4, 1910.



political scene in April when Mayor Davis criticized the Board of Board Trustees for not spending some six thousand dollars in their possession while a five per cent interest rate was being paid on that sum.<sup>4</sup>

Later in the month it was decided to pave South Third Street and River Street to a point just past the Wilson gate, but the residents on River petitioned against the paving for they felt it would be too expensive.<sup>5</sup>

When Howell Davis was elected mayor for the third time in 1911 he recommended that a paving tax be established to expand the street program. He also urged the extension of the sewer system and a revision of the city ordinances.

The council decided to borrow \$12,000.00 in April to extend the paving program, using brick exclusively because, "The price of brick is low."<sup>6</sup> A tax levy of two mills was assessed to pay off the loan.

Doctor E. S. Crill received a telegram from Congressman Frank Clarke on June 19, informing him that \$60,000.00 had been obtained for a new post office and site in Palatka. This project was opposed by R. W. Thompson who felt that the money should be used to dredge the channel in the river but Thompson had another interest aside from being the general manager of the Hart Line; the present post office rented its space from the Hart enterprises.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., April 15, 1910.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., May 6, 1910.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., April 21, 1911.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., July 8, 1910.

The Treasury Department advised that the lot must be at least one hundred and twenty by one hundred and thirty feet in area and bids had to be in Washington by July 27. They weren't. The leading citizens vied with each other to provide the government with a site at almost any price.

TABLE 21  
POST OFFICE SITE PRICES<sup>a</sup>

Name	Location	Price
Charles Burt	Reid and Sixth	\$ 1,250.00
R. J. Adams	Laurel and Third	2,000.00
B. R. Price	Second Street	4,000.00
J. L. Burt	Lemon and Fifth	7,500.00
Mrs. N. G. Robinson	Lemon and Sixth	9,000.00
G. M. Davis	Lemon and Fifth	10,000.00
Martin Griffin	Lemon and First	12,000.00
R. W. Thompson	Lemon and First	20,000.00

<sup>a</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 26, 1910.

The issue dragged on for months; in January, 1911, it was announced that the Griffin lot had been selected but in a letter to E. T. Lancaster in late February, C. D. Hiller, an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, advised that the Thomas lot on Front Street opposite the city hall was to be the location.<sup>8</sup>

An attempt was made by petition to get the location moved "further uptown" in June, but this was not successful. It did indicate to the postal officials in Washington that the townfolk were more interested in selling the land than in getting a new post office; as a result the contract for the new building was

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1911.

not let until August 27, 1915.<sup>9</sup>

A strike by cigar workers in Tampa had a rather profound effect on Palatka in 1910. In an attempt to break the strike, the owners decided to relocate. The first firm to arrive in Palatka was that of Conzel, Wodiska and Company of Ybor City which moved into Fry's old Opera House at Lemon and Fourth. The workers, who " . . . don't drink whiskey, just wine with their meals" noted Editor Russell, were quartered at the Howell House.<sup>10</sup>

The following month three more cigar manufacturers moved to Palatka. The José Escalante and Company factory leased the Athletic Club rooms from the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. It employed three hundred workers according to the Palatka News and Advertiser for September 9, 1910, but the following week's edition mentioned seventy-five at both Wodiska's and Escalante's.<sup>11</sup> This latter issue noted the leasing of the Florida Southern Building on Water Street, adjacent to the Merryday Block, by the Balbin Brothers who were expected to employ two hundred workers.

Near the end of the month the F. Lozano and Sons Company moved into the top floor of the Canova Building on Lemon at Second. Another seventy-five workers were employed there.<sup>12</sup>

The tobacco industry was not new to Palatka. John B. Flinn came to Palatka in 1894 and with G. Loper Bailey and Charles M. Hilliard, organized the El Producto Cigar Manufacturing Company. The factory was located at the corner of North First and Reid

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., August 27, 1915.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., August 16, 1910.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., September 16, 1910.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., September 30, 1910.

Streets. Mann died in 1919.<sup>13</sup>

The impetus given Palatka by the arrival of these companies brought a fresh influx of money to the town, for only a brief period of time however, because in February, 1911, the Wodiska Company announced it was returning to Tampa. The strike had been broken. Although Wodiska gave Palatka a public thank you, Editor Russell had no comment to make.<sup>14</sup>

Palatka in 1910 had a population of three thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine residents by official census. The Heights numbered three hundred and sixty-seven. For the latter, the increase over the ten year period amounted to thirteen souls. For Palatka there was an increase of four hundred and seventy-eight.<sup>15</sup>

The county population increased by fourteen hundred and fifty-five inhabitants to 13,082 in 1910, six thousand two hundred and eighty-eight of whom were white. Putnam, for the first time in its history, was predominantly Negro. There were six thousand eight hundred and four Negro residents, an increase of one thousand one hundred and eighty-three since 1900. The white population increased by only two hundred and seventy-one during the same period.<sup>16</sup>

The Palatka News and Advertiser reported five thousand six hundred and seventy-seven Palatkans on January 6, 1911. This

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., November 24, 1919.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., February 10, 1911.

<sup>15</sup>U. S., Thirteen Census . . . ., II, p. 308.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 326.

much higher figure than the census total for the year earlier was accounted for, in part, by the moving of the cigar factories to Palatka. They remained just long enough to make an impression on the statistics and then moved out.

Other interests organized in Palatka attracted laborers and construction workers. Louis Kalbfield erected the Orpheum Theatre in the summer of 1910; it had a sliding roof for open air concerts and seated a thousand persons. It actually opened in July, although it hadn't been completed, so as to post the latest fight returns from Reno.<sup>17</sup> The old building, formerly the Graham Hotel, was torn down in June. James Fry erected it in 1879 and it was one of the few to survive the fire of 1884. Salem Graham leased it after the fire and made a hotel out of it. It subsequently served as a residence and then a store.<sup>18</sup>

In September the Atlantic Coast Line warehouse on River Street collapsed. The structure was one hundred and eighty feet long and forty feet wide and made of galvanized iron.<sup>19</sup>

F. H. Wilson organized the Florida Woodenware Company in October; the firm manufactured wooden tubs for packaging certain foods. Wilson, W. P. Merriam and C. G. Grimm bought the enterprise from Preston Miller who was initially located at Crescent City but later moved to Palatka. It opened in May, 1911, employing thirty workers.

The Palatka Athletic Association was given authority to

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<sup>17</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, July 8, 1910.

<sup>18</sup>Times-Herald, July 1, 1910.

<sup>19</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, September 2, 1910.

construct a clubhouse over the river at the foot of Kirkland Street by the city council on October 4, 1910.<sup>20</sup>

Noah J. Tilghman opened a Ford agency in March, 1911; he advertised a runabout for seven hundred and thirty dollars; the Torpedo Runabout, which had closed doors sold for forty-five dollars more and the touring car for eight hundred and thirty dollars.<sup>21</sup>

The Ocala Northern Railway extension to Palatka was being constructed and it was expected to be completed to Palatka within six months. The company already had two Baldwin twelve-wheel locomotives, equipped with electric headlights. By September the road was operative to Kenwood and passenger service from Ocala to Orange Springs was inaugurated on September 14. There were three hundred men employed in the construction of the road to Palatka.<sup>22</sup> This extension reached Palatka's outskirts in November but a great celebration was to be delayed for a week while the track was completed to the depot downtown.<sup>23</sup>

Again, delays postponed the arrival of the first train to reach Palatka until January 26, 1912, when it pulled into the depot at 11:45 a.m. Bands, forty automobiles, two thousand people, dinners at Kupperbusch's and the Putnam House, boat races in the river, a dance from 8:30 to 10:00 p.m. in the Putnam House and a "Businessmen's Banquet" after the dance marked the

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<sup>20</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 253.

<sup>21</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, March 31, 1911.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., September 22, 1911.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., December 1, 1911.

festivities.<sup>24</sup>

In May, 1911, the Putnam Ice and Storage Company opened, a "home-owned industry" headed by J. M. Glisson and Superintendent H. D. Atkins. It had a capacity of twenty tons daily.<sup>25</sup>

Education received some much needed attention also in May when the school board purchased a lot immediately south of the high school for construction of a new school on Fifth Street. The acquisition, purchased from Mrs. G. M. Davis for three thousand five hundred dollars, gave the school board two hundred and twenty-five feet on Fifth. "Now for the school," said Editor Russell, "Palatka is behind in the matter of school accommodations."<sup>26</sup>

Fire took its toll in 1911. In March the Rodman Mills burned with a total loss of \$60,000.00. Late in the year the Wilson Cypress Company also burned. At 6:45 a.m., on Monday, December 4, the fire started. The fire department was called immediately but the intensity of the blaze restricted efforts to saving the adjacent property. The mill, built in 1898, was completely destroyed with a loss of \$100,000.00, only sixty per cent of which was insured. Four hundred men were subsequently thrown out of work, including the workers in the woods.<sup>27</sup> Construction began immediately on the new mill.

The Putnam House changed hands again. It was opened in

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., January 26, 1912.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., May 19, 1911.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1911.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., December 8, 1911.

February by the Merrydays who added a cafeteria on the Lemon Street side, but soon closed for a lack of business. The Merrydays erected a new two story brick structure on Lemon opposite the Putnam House in October, 1911. In December, the Ledbetter Brothers, J. W. and W. T., of Rome, Georgia purchased the hotel in another deal arranged by Colonel de Montmollin. They announced that it would open on January 1. It opened in time to accommodate part of the Ocala Northern opening festivities. In May, 1912, the Lemon Street wing of the hotel was removed to accommodate another brick building for the Merrydays.<sup>28</sup>

In August the county commission levied tolls for the new Dunn's Creek and Rice Creek bridges. Tenders were selected in May and perhaps politics had something to do with the appointments which were made on a bid basis. C. W. Williams was hired to tend the St. Johns River Bridge at one hundred dollars per month although five persons submitted bids lower than he.

Charles Crownhart obtained the Dunn's Creek position for forty dollars monthly and Mrs. F. A. Miller, the only person to bid, was hired to tend the Rice Creek Bridge at twenty-five dollars per month.<sup>29</sup>

Politically H. S. McKenzie was elected to the Florida House of Representatives in May, defeating, among others, Editor Russell. In November a state-wide referendum on prohibition was held and Putnam County voted against it by eleven

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., May 17, 1912.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., May 10, 1912.



votes with five hundred and forty votes counted. Russell blamed the Negro Sixth Ward for this; seventy-three of the seventy-five voters in that precinct were opposed to the measure. Russell lamented, ". . . but for this, Palatka would have supported the amendment, and it would have carried the county."<sup>30</sup>

A political development in early 1911 caused Palatka to shudder; a rather vociferous Socialist movement had been organized and nominated C. A. Le Hardy as their candidate for mayor. Some thirty or forty "Socialists," which Russell stated was ". . . another name for dissatisfaction," spearheaded the drive. Le Hardy was the county surveyor, an "intelligent" man who was, however, an anti-prohibitionist. Other candidates were J. H. McHale, running for Alderman in Ward Two; Sherman Hagen, a grocer; and F. P. Du Bose, both of whom were running for Alderman in Ward Seven.<sup>31</sup> None of the candidates were successful, but the party continued to function.

The year 1911 closed with one of the greatest political controversies recorded in Palatka. It began in September when the streetlight contract was awarded to C. S. Hammett and Associates for a five year period beginning February 1, 1912. Some aldermen were absent when the decision was made, according to the Palatka News and Advertiser, by a six to four vote. Three of the members were absent. Nine of ten Palatka businessmen were "indignant" because they felt the contract should have been awarded to Bailey's Palatka Gas Light and Fuel Company, the

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., November 1, 1910.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., March 3, 1911.

lowest bidder.<sup>32</sup>

Probably these businessmen were instrumental, and successful, in obtaining an injunction against the Hammett contract from Judge J. T. Willis about a week later. The court heard arguments from both sides before awarding the injunction.<sup>33</sup>

By October however, Willis dissolved the injunction because there was " . . . no law requiring a contract to be let to the lowest bidder."<sup>34</sup> The business community then presented a petition protesting the awarding of the contract and signed by two hundred citizens to the council. Nevertheless, on October 17, the council entered into the agreement with Hammett by a vote of eight to four. The Hammett bid was nine thousand dollars higher than Bailey's.<sup>35</sup>

The contract called for "twenty or more lights" (direct current luminous arc) at a cost of sixty-five dollars per lamp per year, and one hundred to one hundred and fifty tungsten lamps from thirty-two to eighty candlepower ranging from twenty to thirty dollars per lamp per year.<sup>36</sup>

R. J. Adams, a councilman, signed the petition protesting the awarding of the contract to Hammett, but he also voted to accept Hammett's bid.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., September 8, 1911.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., September 29, 1911.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., October 13, 1911.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., October 20, 1911.

<sup>36</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 344.

<sup>37</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, October 20, 1911.

December brought out the sadist when on the first, two "wretched negro murderers," Edger Youmans and Will McCoy, were hung from a scaffold behind the jail. They could be seen from the street while standing on the scaffold, protected from sight only when the trap was sprung. A crowd gathered to witness the event.<sup>38</sup>

William Jennings Bryan, "The Great Commoner," made his first of several visits to Palatka in January, 1912, staying at the Putnam House. No one knew who he was until Senator S. J. Hilburn arranged an auto parade through town in his honor.<sup>39</sup> It was during this stay that his picture was taken in front of the Putnam House. The visit probably had political implications for Hilburn at least, because a month later, he resigned his State Senate seat to run for Congress.<sup>40</sup>

Bryan received a greater welcome when he returned in May; he was met at the Union Depot by "fifty gaily decorated automobiles" which escorted him down Lemon Street to the Putnam House. The ". . . peerless leader of popular democracy" then lectured to six hundred at the Howell Theatre on "The Signs of the Times."<sup>41</sup>

Palatka received national attention in February, 1912, when the Florida Republicans held their convention there. The meeting actually collapsed before any real platform could be devised,

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., December 21, 1911.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., January 26, 1912.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., February 16, 1912.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., May 3, 1912.

but a ten man delegation of William Howard Taft people was chosen to represent the state at the national convention in Chicago. Taft was strongly supported by the Postmaster's Protective Association; half of the central committeemen were postmasters. Those "secession-men" opposed to Taft broke away and called a convention of their own, elsewhere, where they nominated Theodore Roosevelt for president and his men for state positions. Roosevelt was in Miami when this occurred. In the middle of April the secessionists "repudiated the Palatka convention" once more, and called for another to convene in Jacksonville on May 18. The big question centered on whether Roosevelt had been behind the whole secession movement.<sup>42</sup>

The question was answered, at least in part, by the account of the convention provided in the local press. Roosevelt felt that the secession was justified because ". . . negro [sic] supporters were barred from the convention hall after being tricked into leaving to refresh themselves with soft drinks."<sup>43</sup> The paper was ". . . investigating alleged threats and violence" of the Negro supporters because Sheriff Kennerly was reportedly forced into ejecting some Roosevelt Negroes from the hall when they tried ". . . to kick up a disturbance." Three, Posey and Robinson of Palatka and Powell of Jacksonville, left the hall when they were ". . . squelched in a parliamentary manner"

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<sup>42</sup>G. N. Green, "Republicans, Bull Moose and Negroes in Florida, 1912," Florida Historical Quarterly, Vol. XLIII, No. 2 (October, 1964) p. 153ff.

<sup>43</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, May 31, 1912.

according to the editor.<sup>44</sup>

New economic life was introduced to Palatka in the form of several companies. The Board of Trade was instrumental in attracting the Southern Portable House Company to Palatka in January. It manufactured prefabricated houses which could be assembled "without a nail" in two days. The homes were made of cypress. The following month brought the New South Farm and Home Company, a land investment company with holdings between Ocala and Interlachen, to town from Jacksonville. Its offices were in the Hart Building formerly occupied by the Palatka Athletic Association and the cigar company (left un-named for fairly obvious reasons). The Palatka Hospital opened in March;<sup>45</sup> private rooms cost fifteen dollars weekly, which included attention, board and laundry, while a ward cost ten dollars weekly. A charity ward was included in this operation.<sup>46</sup>

The State Bank of Palatka opened its doors in May, with M. M. Smith of Orlando as president.<sup>47</sup>

A new steamboat line initiated service to Palatka in July when the Florida Navigation Company, more commonly referred to as the Palatka Day Line, began service from Palatka to Green Cove Springs and Mayport on the steamer "Kennedy." The line was purchased from Captain George Pryor and reorganized as per above with Captain George Pryor as president and captain.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>It is not clear whether this was the initial opening of the facility referred to above.

<sup>46</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, March 8, 1912.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., May 10, 1912.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1912.

A grand celebration was scheduled for July 4; attractions included band music, baseball games, bicycle races, boat races, fireworks, motorcycle races, swimming contests and tub races. Special low rates were offered by the railroads to attract people to the festivities. It rained.

The morning baseball game was called off and Ormond lost to Daytona later in the afternoon. The boat races had to be cancelled because the wind blew the harbor full of hyacinths. William Pierce won first prize in the auto parade which had been postponed until five o'clock p.m. His car was all decorated with flowers. The only fireworks display was that in front of the B.P.O.E. building, donated by Charley Doan, who had a Chinese laundry on Second Street, at a cost of thirty-two dollars.<sup>49</sup>

A move to stimulate interest in a paved road connecting Jacksonville and Tampa on the west bank of the river was highlighted by a mass parade of automobile dealers in Jacksonville who drove over the route. They met a convention of the Florida Press Association in Palatka from June 20 to 22. While in Palatka, an excursion to Crescent City was arranged for the conventioners aboard the steamer "Crescent."<sup>50</sup>

Despite the press convention, no member of the profession attended the Socialist convention held in the courthouse on the twenty-first of June. The local reporters " . . . were too busy hosting the Florida Press Association."<sup>51</sup> Fourteen members

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., July 5, 1912.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., June 28, 1912.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

attended the convention and James M. Chesser of Hollister was nominated as candidate for the State Senate, Mathew Drennan and Henry V. Smith for the House, and B. L. Moody for the county commission.

Le Hardy was again given credit for being the instigator; he ". . . furnishes a large part of the brains for the organization . . . which is working for the . . . overthrow of the regular Democratic party organization in Putnam County."<sup>52</sup>

A drive to inject new blood into the Board of Trade began in July when W. B. Royster was hired as the first executive secretary of the body. He came from Chattanooga where he'd held a similar position.<sup>53</sup> Two weeks later a public meeting was held at the courthouse and although "a good attendance of representative citizens . . . ." was noted, it was somewhat disappointing because two hundred and fifty invitations had been sent out.<sup>54</sup>

Membership teams were organized, and a drive to attract new people began. By July 26, there were one hundred and thirty-five new members.<sup>55</sup> They wasted little time; one of the first projects they engaged in was an effort to get local milk men to "clean up" their operations.<sup>56</sup>

The Board of Trade served as the driving force behind the

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., May 31, 1912.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., July 5, 1912.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1912.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., July 26, 1912.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., August 2, 1912.

procurement of Palatka's first fire engine. In October the city purchased an American La France engine costing five thousand eight hundred dollars. This was to be paid in three years time.<sup>57</sup> Aldermen Usins and Minton opposed the measure (which passed by a nine to two vote) because this obligated future councils to make the payments.<sup>58</sup>

Progress prevailed however and it quickly became apparent that the fire department had to be reorganized as well. Again, the Board of Trade took up the cause and publicized the issue in the positive sense which resulted in the creation of a permanent fire department on April 1, 1913, by a vote of seven to none. M. G. Phillips was appointed chief with Emmitt Sims and L. P. King as his first and second assistants.<sup>59</sup> The engine arrived on February 18, 1913.<sup>60</sup>

A letter proposing the acquisition of all of Palatka's waterfront property was received by the Board of Trade in October. After the property had been obtained, the writer, "A Palatka booster," recommended the construction of city docks and the dredging of a twenty foot channel to Jacksonville.<sup>61</sup>

While pondering this, the Board criticized health conditions in the city and this instigated the Women's Club to declare "Clean-up Week" in November.<sup>62</sup> George Selden commented that

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., October 18, 1912.

<sup>58</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 469.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 485.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 468.

<sup>61</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, October 25, 1912.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., November 15, 1912.



it was difficult to operate his plant because there was so much illness, but C. E. Melton put it more succinctly when he said that there had been more illness in his family since coming to Palatka than all the years he'd lived in Florida.<sup>63</sup>

Mayor Warren issued a proclamation stating, "The city is badly in need of a general cleaning," and supported the women by declaring November 11-16 as "Municipal Cleaning Week."<sup>64</sup>

Professor G. W. Land was attracted to Palatka by the Board of Trade in November to establish the Palatka Business College.<sup>65</sup> Land advertised the facility in the Palatka News and Advertiser for January 24, 1913. The school opened on December 12, 1912.

The Board's activities closed the year with the sending of a fifty member delegation to the county commission to protest the convict lease system; they advocated putting the prisoners to work on the roads.<sup>66</sup> This effort was not successful because the commissioners ruled that it would cost more if the convicts were put to work on the roads than it did to lease them.<sup>67</sup>

The commissioners had to subscribe five hundred and twenty dollars in May, 1912, for the construction of new steps at the courthouse. The original steps were built by an "incompetent engineer" and the project was successfully bid for by

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., October 25, 1912.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., December 20, 1912.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., January 10, 1913.

Henry . Baker.<sup>68</sup>

At the same meeting the first county license law was passed. It was determined that all automobiles had to secure a license by June 1.

Notable achievements of the city council in 1912 included the granting of a thirty year franchise to the Southern Bell Telephone Company allowing it the right to erect poles on the streets of Palatka. Not all councilmen were enthusiastic about the arrangement for the measure passed by a vote of seven to four.<sup>69</sup>

The office of city physician was established at this meeting; Doctor J. C. Chandler was hired to fill the position at a salary of three hundred dollars per month.<sup>70</sup> Creation of the office was probably due to the efforts of the mayor who also happened to be a physician.

A storm of controversy was initiated in August when Mayor Warren decided to enforce an old statute that required the closing of all businesses on the Sabbath. No sales, no barter, no exchange of "goods, wares or merchandise" was to occur on Sunday.<sup>71</sup>

It was not known how old the statute was which intensified the issue, but Captain Walter M. Davis recorded it "many years ago" among the Palatka Ordinances.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., May 10, 1912.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., June 7, 1912.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 499.

<sup>72</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 30, 1912.

Initially it called for the closing of businesses at six-thirty p.m. Saturday, but the "uptown businesses" had long ignored it. Violation of the ordinance could result in sixty days jail sentence or a fine of one hundred dollars at the discretion of the mayor.<sup>73</sup>

Mayor Warren was the target of much criticism for this decision to enforce the closing law; calls for repeal of the ordinance emerged but sentiment in the community was divided. The Palatka News and Advertiser supported the enforcement. To open for business on Sunday was ". . . contrary to the law of God!"<sup>74</sup>

Support for those opposed to Sunday business transactions came from the Federal Government when in late August the post office ordered all its branches to close on Sunday.<sup>75</sup>

The council decided to let the ordinance stand. An amendment was passed to change the hours, but Mayor Warren vetoed it. In two meetings on Friday and Tuesday (August 23 and 27) the council agreed to let the issue lie.

Not until May, 1913, was any action taken when the council voted to allow businesses to open on Sunday except for the hours from ten to noon.<sup>76</sup>

This issue was so predominating that other former controversial items were given much less attention. The Palatka Gas

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., August 16, 1912.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., August 23, 1912.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., August 30, 1912.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., May 30, 1913.

Light and Fuel Company was given a two year contract to keep Palatka's street lights burning all night.<sup>77</sup>

Death took two long time residents in 1912. John H. Merryday died in August having been in Palatka since 1875, arriving from England; and on November 19, Captain Richard J. Adams succumbed. Adams' death left only one man alive who'd been in Palatka since the 1850's, Captain Dunham of East Palatka.<sup>78</sup>

Adams was born in Vermont on May 3, 1833, and came to Palatka in 1856 to work for Hubbard L. Hart as a stage driver. During the Civil War he'd served as a civilian in the Confederate Quartermaster Department and was stationed at Indian River, then at Gainesville and Waldo. He reputedly took the machinery from the "Columbine" to the latter place. After being paroled at Waldo in May, 1865, he returned to Palatka and once again worked for Hart, this time as captain of the "Silver Springs" which introduced the first regular passenger service on the Oklawaha River.<sup>79</sup>

Buffalo Bill brought his Wild West Show to Palatka in October for a one day performance that attracted forty-five hundred people from "all over Putnam."<sup>80</sup> The show featured the Far East Show of Pawnee Bill as well.

Sheriff Kennorly got in on the old-law enforcing wagon

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., August 23, 1913.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., November 22, 1912.

<sup>79</sup>Times-Herald, November 22, 1912.

<sup>80</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, October 25, 1912.

when in February he declared that henceforth those individuals under fifty-five years of age who could not, or would not, pay their taxes would have to put five days on the county roads each year.<sup>81</sup>

The Women's Club instituted a campaign for suffrage in February. The movement started slowly, but later commanded more attention.

A "spectacular accident" occurred on February 14 when the Florida East Coast Train Number Thirty-Seven backed off the bridge into the river at eleven p.m. The train pulled into the Union Depot and then was to back over the bridge to East Palatka before continuing south. The drawbridge had been opened to allow the "City of Jacksonville," a Clyde liner, to pass, and thus the bridge was left open.

There were twenty passengers in the last Pullman car, two-thirds of which fell into the river submerging the back end of the car to the top of the rear window. Had the coupling not held, the whole car would have gone under. T. J. Barnett of the Palatka Auto and Supply Company raised the car with the Wilson Company derrick, but the line was not clear until four-thirty Sunday afternoon. It was only the second accident on the bridge that anyone could recall; the first having occurred years earlier when an engine fell into the river while on the draw.<sup>82</sup>

The new fire engine was given its first test in April when it answered a call at Graham's Hotel and in the stable at

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid., February 7, 1913.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., February 21, 1913.

The rear of Silas Smith's store on North Tenth. The novelty of the engine in action had its drawbacks however, for the area had to be cleared of observers, especially small boys who hampered the firemen's efforts by climbing all over the truck.<sup>83</sup>

A new school site was obtained in April when the block bounded by Laurel, Oak, Seventh and Eighth was purchased from the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. The Board of Trade was credited with being "instrumental" again, and Editor Russell exhorted, "Now for a \$75,000.00 bond issue."<sup>84</sup>

The first movie filmed in the Palatka area occurred in May, 1912, when scenes depicting the Wilson Company operation were shot.<sup>85</sup>

The Methodists purchased the corner of Reid and Fourth from Miss Carrie Warner Carter of New York for five thousand dollars in May to construct a new church. The new building was expected to cost \$25,000.00.<sup>86</sup>

In May the council requested the State Legislature to permit Palatka to extend its city limits because of a lack of control over unsanitary water in "outlying areas."<sup>87</sup> The council requested the town council of Palatka Heights, on June 3, that it grant Palatka the right to extend its water lines into the Heights.<sup>88</sup> On June 20, the Palatka News and

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., April 11, 1913.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., April 18, 1913.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., May 9, 1913.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., June 20, 1913.

<sup>87</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes," p. 494.

<sup>88</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 4.

Advertiser announced that a referendum election relative to the annexation of Palatka Heights would be held on August 8.

Palatka Heights had been incorporated in 1886, and its residents had enjoyed a tax free era since 1889. The town council refused to levy taxes and therefore improve its situation because this obviously would cost money. What really bothered Palatka was the old Boston firm which operated the Palatka Water Works. This company was located entirely within the limits of Palatka Heights and the city of Palatka had no control over it.

The Heights residents gloated. The annexation had been turned down by seventy-one votes. Russell bemoaned the fact that only three hundred of the six hundred and thirty-six registered voters of Palatka turned out for the election. In the Heights, one hundred and twelve of one hundred and fifteen electors opposed the issue. After the votes were counted eleven guns were fired from the hill, ". . . to let the denizens of the lower citizenry know that the people were still residing on the Heights . . . ." <sup>89</sup> The next day witnessed a "monster jubilee" on River Street. <sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 8, 1913.

<sup>90</sup>The Heights bounded Palatka on the west and to the south including all of the area south to the river where it curved around Devils Elbow.

## CHAPTER XVII. A TIME FOR DECISION

August, 1913, wasn't a good month for Palatka. Secretary W. B. Royster resigned his position because of ". . . too much factionalism . . ." in the city government, a phenomenon that plagued the town for years except for the several real areas of progress as already noted, and to be noted.

The school bond issue was voted on in the same month and although it had passed, an ". . . impropriety in the election . . ." resulted in its being declared ". . . null and void."<sup>1</sup> Russell sank a little deeper when he blamed the opposition faction of Ward Six, the Negro section of town, for the declaration.<sup>2</sup>

The Moose Lodge, Palatka Lodge Number 1401, was organized in September. Past Dictator was C. J. Loomis; Dictator was A. D. Curry; R. E. L. Mann was Vice Dictator; L. W. Black was Secretary; and the Treasurer was David Howell.<sup>3</sup>

The first aircraft visit to Palatka occurred on December 10 when "Aeronaut Hooper flew over Palatka during the fair."<sup>4</sup> The fair featured the Johnny J. Jones carnival. Because many residents missed seeing the flight, it was staged

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<sup>1</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 29, 1913.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>The Item, September 11, 1913.

<sup>4</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, December 12, 1913.



again on the eleventh, taking off from the baseball park at one o'clock and soaring to an altitude of two thousand feet. Tickets were twenty-five cents for adults and ten cents for children.

One of the first real positive steps Palatka made occurred on March 3, 1914, when the council passed a resolution calling for a new city charter.<sup>5</sup>

In a referendum election on July 21 the citizens voted in favor of the commission form of government and a committee was created to devise the new charter. The members of the committee were J. H. Yelverton, Jr., W. P. Merriam, H. M. Fearnside and the city attorney.<sup>6</sup> Nine years elapsed before this committee realized anything for its efforts however.

Economic conservatism took a firmer grasp on Palatka in the latter half of 1914. In August petitioners from Wards One, Two, Four, and Seven submitted a request that the city enter the electric business. It was withdrawn.<sup>7</sup>

Two firemen, Simms and Roberts, had been fined for speeding around town in the fire truck, not while answering a call. Their fines of fifteen dollars were refunded because Mayor Kennerly said their services to the city as firemen were too valuable to lose.<sup>8</sup>

On September 14 B. I. Gay moved that the Friday night fire drill be suspended because of the increase in cost of tires

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<sup>5</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 43.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 68.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

for the fire truck, but " . . . after varied discussion it was decided to allow the Fire Drill to continue and to instruct the Firemen to use a more moderate speed in turning all corners."<sup>9</sup>

In November, Palatka's City Council voted against a second telephone exchange for the town.

Several changes affected marine activity during 1914. The Beach and Miller Line purchased the dock behind the Knights of Pythias "Castle," formerly the property of the McCoy Fish House. The new owners intended to construct a new dock and an alley from it to Water Street. The Clyde Line leased the Thompson dock at the foot of Lemon Street.

On the river itself, Hastings began sending its potatoes out of the area on the steamer "Crescent," which ferried them as far as Jacksonville.<sup>10</sup>

A new bridge across the river was considered in July; a representative of the Converse Bridge Company of Chattanooga was in Palatka to study the cost of a new structure made of steel.<sup>11</sup>

Several changes were enacted relating to the civil service officers of Palatka. It was voted to increase the allowance paid the volunteer firemen for calls to one dollar for a day call and two dollars per night call on December 15.<sup>12</sup> On January 19 the number of volunteers that could answer and be paid

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>10</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, April 17, 1914.

<sup>11</sup>Daily Item, July 6, 1914.

<sup>12</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 102.

for an alarm, was limited to six.<sup>13</sup>

C. M. Livingston was appointed police chief by Mayor Kennerly on January 12, due to the unauthorized absence of Chief Varnes.

February and March brought complaints to the council. Miss Mulholland complained again about the dust from the Melton Mill and Mr. Ledbetter of the Putnam House criticized the blowing of a steam whistle for prolonged lengths of time which disturbed his guests.

C. T. Shinn bid one thousand six hundred ninety dollars and sixty cents for a new city jail on March 16.<sup>14</sup>

April brought a protest that too many chickens were running "at large." On May 4 the fire department was instructed that it must obey all city traffic ordinances unless it was on its way to a fire. An overzealous driver or two, no doubt.

B. C. Pearce was appointed second assistant chief on June 1, 1915.<sup>15</sup>

Palatka's last hanging apparently proved too much for the city fathers, for at the same meeting that Pearce was appointed, they resolved that hanging was an act that tended " . . . to debase the morals and pander the unhealthy morbid appetites of the spectators, more especially in the case of children."<sup>16</sup> Clyde Stover was to be hanged on June 11 for a double murder

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 143.

near Welaka.<sup>17</sup> The council requested the sheriff to construct a screen to shield the gallows completely. The council also resolved that the "... spiritual advisors of the dead men must complete their ministrations before the criminal was conducted from his cell to the scaffold." The fear was there as well as the repulsiveness of the act.<sup>18</sup>

Traffic attracted the attention of the two governments in the Palatka area; the county commission ruled out truck traffic on the St. Johns River Bridge in February<sup>19</sup> and in September the council resolved to erect a sign with "... letters large enough to read from thirty feet," limiting the speed of vehicles to six miles per hour and warning motorists to watch for children. The sign was placed at the corner of Reid and Fifth Streets.<sup>20</sup>

Also in September the council appropriated ninety dollars for the "colors and nameplate" of the schooner "Palatka" under construction at the yard of Surles Brothers and Denton in East Palatka, across from Devils Elbow. The one hundred and sixty-three foot vessel would be capable of carrying a half million board feet of lumber.<sup>21</sup>

The launching of the vessel was announced by the Palatka

<sup>17</sup>The bodies of Alonzo and Horace Gardner were never found, but Stover was a Negro. Palatka Morning Post, February 17, 1915.

<sup>18</sup>Palatka Morning Post, February 17, 1915.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., February 3, 1915.

<sup>20</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 172.

<sup>21</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 27, 1915.

Morning Post on October 14; Miss Margaret Millard christened the vessel in ceremonies highlighted by a speech delivered by Governor Trammell. A dance was held on board the craft, built of Florida pine from eight to ten that evening. To celebrate the occasion, school was dismissed and businesses were closed.<sup>22</sup>

After long last the post office issue was settled. The contract was let to the Westchester Engineering Company of White Plains, New York, for a limestone building costing \$39,652.00 or a sandstone structure costing \$42,000.00.<sup>23</sup>

Mrs. Ida Crouch-Hazlett was arrested by the chief of police on October 19 for speaking at the corner of Lemon and Second Streets. Editor Russell, when he got around to reporting the incident, indicated she'd been ". . . forcibly removed by the chief to the area of the courthouse square."<sup>24</sup> Mrs. Crouch-Hazlett told the council she'd been treated ". . . discourteously by four citizens."<sup>25</sup> Russell reported her as feeling ". . . humiliated to the extent of \$25,000.00," and that she demanded the removal of the chief.<sup>26</sup>

The council referred the matter to the Police Committee, but council activity was interrupted by the death of Mayor S. J. Kennerly on October 7. Nearly a month later, on November 2, the committee reported to the council that it couldn't give an

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<sup>22</sup>Palatka Morning Post, October 14, 1915.

<sup>23</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, September 3, 1915.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1915.

<sup>25</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 175.

<sup>26</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, November 12, 1915.

" . . . intelligent report on the complaint . . . of Mrs. Ida Crouch-Hazlett . . ." The report continued that the mayor had to "clearly outline" the duties of the police chief to that individual and . . . instruct him fully as to the law relative to arrests."<sup>27</sup> Russell reported that her " . . . constitutional rights would be protected in the future."<sup>28</sup> The big fuss could be attributed to Mrs. Crouch-Hazlett's being a Socialist.

Shortly after the death of Mayor Kennerly, Doctor E. S. Crill died. He had come to Palatka in 1877, was elected to the State Senate in 1880 and served as Secretary of the Treasury during the administration of Governor Perry. In 1889, Crill organized the East Florida Savings and Trust Company of Palatka.<sup>29</sup>

Meetings advocating the construction of roads were held in Rodman. The chief topic of discussion was the extension of the brick road from where the Palatka district road ended to Rodman, and from there to Kenwood and Peniel. In Crescent City, extension of the brick paving from Dunn's Creek to the Volusia County line was urged.<sup>30</sup>

The charter committee was "hard at work," according to Russell, but he deplored a notable "lack of public interest" in the undertaking.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 228.

<sup>28</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, November 12, 1915.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., October 29, 1915.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

The year 1916 was marked by little development according to the council minutes. The city council dealt with such relatively insignificant things as detailing the city prisoners to work on the streets guarded by a city employee designated by the city engineer.<sup>32</sup>

The war came to Palatka in June when E. D. Sims, the first assistant fire chief was called into military duty. B. C. Pearce was promoted to fill the vacant position at a salary of fifty dollars per month. Four months later he resigned.<sup>33</sup>

The mayor was concerned about some two hundred and fifty "surface privies" within the city limits.<sup>34</sup>

Peter J. Becks, Alderman from Ward Four, died on July 6; the council continued the practice of including a memorial to the deceased official in the minutes.<sup>35</sup>

Much attention was given to the appointment of Colonel F. J. H. von Engelken of "Vingolf on the St. Johns" (meaning East Palatka) to the position of Director of the United States Mint.<sup>36</sup>

Editor Russell was aroused in August when he heard that twenty-five Negroes left Palatka to work on construction jobs in the north. He asked, "Who recruited them?" Not only Russell was upset however, for the council levied a fee of one

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<sup>32</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 265.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 235.

<sup>36</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 18, 1916.

thousand dollars for labor recruiter's licences. Russell claimed the "labor was needed here" but Palatka had no real great construction projects active, and also ". . . men who are being enticed away need the protection of the law," which reflects the old paternalism of the South.<sup>37</sup>

Russell was no longer overly concerned about the Socialist threat to Putnam, for when, in September, the Socialist Party of Palatka nominated C. J. Le Hardy for tax assessor, E. E. Loomis for Justice of the Peace, and Charles Clark for state representative (against H. S. McKenzie), he didn't bother to comment on the posed threat as he'd done in the past.<sup>38</sup>

The post office moved to its new building on December 8. A reception was held from five until eight-thirty to celebrate the completion of the structure which ultimately cost \$48,357.00.<sup>39</sup> The building provided a private office for the postmaster, Harry Gray, and a corridor on the second floor which connected his office with:

. . . a dark, secret passage which skirts the entire upper floor. This passage is painted black and from its walls are several 'louvres,' or lookouts through which he [the postmaster] can see every movement of every person in the office, without himself being seen.<sup>40 & 41</sup>

Prior to moving to this location the postal operation had been

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., September 8, 1916.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., December 8, 1916.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>The building still stands, used today as the City Hall of Palatka.



housed in the Crill Building on Lemon and for the twenty years prior to moving, in the Hart Building on Water Street.<sup>42</sup>

Editor H. P. Nerwich of the Palatka Morning Post provided statistics of various Palatka groups on September 28. There were twenty-seven boys and thirty-nine girls enrolled in the high school, grades nine through twelve. Twenty-three boys and fifty-nine girls were enrolled in the grammar school, grades seven and eight. The "intermediate school," grades five and six, had thirty-four boys and thirty-two girls, and in the primary grades of one through four, there were one hundred boys and ninety-eight girls. Only three boys and six girls were seniors in the high school.

Politically, Palatka was divided into seven wards; all but two of which had some Negro residents who were registered voters. The total number of white registered voters was five hundred and twenty-eight; there were only one hundred and ninety registered Negroes in the town which was, according to the 1900 Census, nearly half Negro. A total of seven hundred and eighteen voters were registered. The two largest Negro wards were the Sixth with one hundred and twelve, and the Seventh with sixty-four voters. Wards One, Two and Five had seven, three and four registered Negroes respectively.<sup>43</sup>

Nerwich reported that approximately one thousand six hundred and fifty voters in the county were Democrats, and there were from six hundred and fifty to seven hundred Republicans

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Palatka Morning Post, October 25, 1916.

and Socialists.<sup>44</sup>

The period of decline continued during 1917. Some attempts to rejuvenate the town occurred; in January the Palatka Ad Club was organized as a promotional agency but it was apparently a short-lived thing for it was not given credit for anything in the future press.<sup>45</sup>

The school children marched for an " . . . adequate and respectable school building" in January. Rather nicely Russell reported that "several hundred little children" took part in the protest and, "It was a surprise to many to know that we had so many children of school age in Palatka."<sup>46</sup>

The by-word, however, continued to be optimism. The Post, on February 17, reported Palatka Heights to be "leaning toward annexation," and that the Baptists intended to construct a new hospital in the town. Norwich almost pleaded that " . . . a greater, better and more united Palatka . . ." was necessary.<sup>47</sup>

The annexation issue got as far as the Board of Trade in February, which, after discussion, came up with no concrete proposal.

June provided Palatka with an economic stimulus; it was announced that N. F. Dillon and Max Germain had purchased the S. S. Browning property opposite Devil's Elbow and were going to begin construction on two schooners within a two week period of

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., January 13, 1917.

<sup>46</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, January 19, 1917.

<sup>47</sup>Palatka Morning Post, February 23, 1917.

side. The vessels were to be completed in seven months.<sup>48</sup> On July 1, however, the News reported that the company would not locate here because of a lack of skilled workers.<sup>49</sup>

Palatka was reminded that the country was at war in July, when the conscription lists were printed in the newspapers.<sup>50</sup>

The school districts of East Palatka and Palatka were merged in September when the voters decided the issue in favor of the proposal. East Palatkans voted sixty-one to one for the proposal while Palatka voted thirty-six to seventeen in favor of the issue. Editor Russell deplored one of two things, the decision or the apathy of Palatka voters.<sup>51</sup>

A sixteen foot wide road, narrowing to nine feet, was completed to the Heights over Selden's Hill in October. The road extended all the way to Peniel.

The great issue in Palatka during 1917 was the announced closing of the Oklawaha Valley Railroad, otherwise known as the Ocala Northern. On November 9, the Assets Realization Board of New York, owners, announced they were going to scrap the system. The News deplored this; it claimed the owners would realize more than six times what had been paid for the road by junking it and suggested that Putnam County urge the continuation of service.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Palatka News and Advertiser, June 15, 1917.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., July 27, 1917.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., July 20, 1917.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., September 14, 1917.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., November 9, 1917.

A suit was instituted to force the continued operation in the court of Judge James T. Wills in Gainesville who decided the company must continue operation and if it failed to do so, he would appoint a receiver for the line.<sup>53</sup>

He did. H. S. Cummings, President of the Rodman Lumber Company, which had an expressed interest in the road's service, was appointed receiver in January, 1918, by Judge Bullock.<sup>54</sup> The road resumed operation on January 26. Palatka breathed easier.

An attempt to attract attention to the road occurred in May when special fares of one dollar (round trip) were offered to encourage tours to Silver Springs.<sup>55</sup>

The owners attempted to once again get rid of the road in November. Cummings, its receiver, blocked the sale of the line to the French Government; he had invested \$20,000.00 in the system and insisted that it could be run at a profit. In blind optimism, it was stated that it was ". . . safe to predict that the road will never be junked."<sup>56</sup>

An example of Cummings' investment was determined in December, 1919, when it was announced that he would convert the line to gas powered Reo engines. There would be two cars, each accommodating forty passengers, one for whites and one for

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., November 16, 1917

<sup>54</sup>Times-Herald, January 25, 1918

<sup>55</sup>Palatka Morning Post, May 17, 1918.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., November 5, 1918.

Negroes. They were equipped with a baggage compartment, but no freight would be handled. The schedule called for one round trip daily; the train would leave Palatka at eight o'clock in the morning, arriving in Ocala at eleven. The return trip began at five minutes past two and the train returned to Palatka at five-twenty in the afternoon. It was to be dubbed the "Silver Springs Route."<sup>57</sup>

In August, 1921, the road was ordered sold so as to satisfy \$27,000.00 in delinquent taxes owed Marion and Putnam Counties from 1912 to 1920. The Palatka Daily News took the challenge and assured that the ". . . State Railway Commission may intervene. . . and prevent the dismantling as it did before."<sup>58</sup>

A "large delegation" (eight in number) of Palatkans journeyed to Ocala in November to protest the sale of the road at the courthouse there. The sheriff of Marion County was ordered to sell the line at auction on November 7.<sup>59</sup>

It succeeded. Revenue certificates sufficient to cover the delinquent taxes were sold and the line was to resume operation immediately. A new receiver, Andrew Christensen of New York, was appointed in December. He stated the road would continue to operate on its regular schedule.<sup>60</sup> The rolling stock was tied up at Silver Springs and service would continue between

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., December 13, 1919.

<sup>58</sup> Palatka Daily News, August 31, 1921

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., October 7, 1921

<sup>60</sup> Times-Herald, December 2, 1921

Palatka and that place only.<sup>61</sup>

The line abandoned its "no-freight policy" by October, 1922. At that time a brick company was organized in Palatka using clay from the Kenwood vicinity freighted over the rail line.

The city council in 1917 attempted to enact an ordinance which would have strengthened already existent Jim Crow policies by forcing separate accommodations for white and Negro passengers" . . . in or upon public conveyances." The city attorney advised that this was against the law which" . . . did not permit discrimination in such matters," and when the issue came to a vote, " . . . the ordinance was lost."<sup>62</sup>

A controversy arose in February, 1917, when at a Chatauga meeting in the Hastings Auditorium, it was proposed that a new county be formed. President R. M. Burt of the Booster Club made the announcement, and presented a cloth map colored with crayons to define the proposed political entity. The map defined Hastings County, with Hastings as the county seat, as including the south half of St. Johns County and the portion of Putnam County east of the river, excluding East Palatka and San Mateo.

Reasons for the proposal were primarily attributed to dissatisfaction with their current status relative to public administration, roads, schools and tax assessment.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Palatka Daily News, November 26, 1921.

<sup>62</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 333.

<sup>63</sup>Times-Herald, February 9, 1917.

The "county" fever spread quickly to the south where "moody County" was proposed at Bunnell, with that town as the county seat, which would incorporate the south half of St. Johns County and the northern part of Volusia County.<sup>64</sup>

In April the council formally thanked J. R. Mellon for offering \$10,000.00 to the city so as to purchase the land adjacent to the high school for expansion of that facility.<sup>65</sup>

A resolution calling for an investigation of the engineering, street and water departments passed in April. It was instigated by the feeling that there was " . . . mismanagement in city affairs."<sup>66</sup>

The mayor called for " . . . accordance with the view" that Palatka businesses should close for a half day during the summer months, a practice " . . . customary in the City of Palatka for a number of years past, the day for such half holiday being Thursday."<sup>67</sup>

Alderman M. B. Cochrane declared that something had to be done about the " . . . buzzards in backyards on Madison and Third Streets."<sup>68</sup>

Other indications of what Palatka's city fathers dealt with were: in August City Engineer Stallings recommended that the horse and buggy used by the water meter reader he sold and

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., February 16, 1917.

<sup>65</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 351.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 362.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 375.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

a bicycle be purchased for him;<sup>69</sup> Police Chief Livingston asked for and received a ten cent supplement to the daily food ration for prisoners, increasing it to fifty cents;<sup>70</sup> and a claim presented by Mary E. Smith to the city for forty dollars was referred to the city attorney to determine whether the city could be held responsible for the death of her cow which resulted from its falling into an open manhole.<sup>71</sup>

The council drew up a budget in October for 1918; it amounted to \$48,325.00<sup>72</sup>

The new Women's Club Building on Reid Street was dedicated in November. Mrs. J. L. Dunsford, president, introduced the Jacksonville president, Mrs. W. S. Jennings, the featured speaker.<sup>73</sup>

Palatka and St. Augustine were connected by a brick highway in January.<sup>74</sup>

The year closed on a more optimistic note although only by chance did the Grimsley Neck Construction Company relocate in East Palatka. The firm had a government contract to build floating dry docks and had initially located on Lake Crescent. When it was discovered they could not float the structures down Dunn's Creek because of the narrow drawbridge, the company had

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 390.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 408.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 421.

<sup>72</sup>Palatka Morning Post, October 17, 1917.

<sup>73</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, November 16, 1917.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.



to move to the east bank of the river just below the railroad bridge.<sup>75</sup>

The company was headed by S. N. Weisburg, who took up residence in von Engelken's home, but apparently he was ". . . so extravagant and made so many mistakes that he was finally let out."<sup>76</sup> The firm was reorganized into the Marine Construction Company headed by W. J. Rankin, a more "practical" individual.

Sixty men were busy constructing the first of six docks during July. It was to be completed in October, and ". . . it should be made a festal occasion by Palatka."<sup>77</sup>

The first strike in Palatka's history occurred in September when forty-seven of the fifty-six employees of the Marine Construction Company walked off the job for a twenty per cent increase in pay. Carpenter's wages were two and a half to three and a half dollars per day but the men indicated that unless they were granted the increase, they would leave for Jacksonville where the daily rate was six to seven dollars daily. They also insisted on a nine hour day but Manager Rankin said he ". . . couldn't grant it and didn't intend to."<sup>78</sup>

The editor of the Post felt the Businessmen's Association should take a hand in arbitrating the issue which was completely out of the question as it had no jurisdiction.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., December 14, 1917.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., July 26, 1918.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., July 26, 1918.

<sup>78</sup> Palatka Morning Post, September 12, 1918.

Rankin pleaded his case on September 14 when he pointed out that the wages were equal to those paid any sawmill in the area, comparing his operation to that of the local sawmills because there was a sawmill function as a part of his company. He stated that all people qualifying as carpenters received four dollars daily, but there were none in Palatka because ". . . the government has them all."<sup>79</sup> He continued, "We cannot get skilled labor and we are willing to educate our men when they show any inclination to learn."<sup>80</sup> Rankin had no objection, naturally to the Businessmen's Association attempting to settle the issue. Whether it did is not clear, but the strike did end.

The first section of the drydock, some 16,000 tons displacement, was completed in January, 1919. It was to be towed to New York, carrying one million board feet of lumber.<sup>81</sup> The company continued to function through September, 1919; an article describing the operation was printed in the Post on the twelfth.

Patriotism, in different forms, was evident in Palatka during the year 1918. "Meatless" and "Wheatless" days were observed in the hotels and restaurants as early as January. The former was observed on Tuesdays and Thursdays while Wednesday was the wheatless day.<sup>82</sup>

A tent had been erected on the corner of Reid and Fourth

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., September 14, 1918.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., January 9, 1919.

<sup>82</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, January 25, 1918.

Streets in late January where there were " . . . wounded Canadian soldiers on display." The exhibition included a model of trench warfare and a "trophy" exhibit of captured German souvenirs.<sup>83</sup>

On February 17, four hundred soldiers from Camp Joseph E. Johnston, near Jacksonville, toured to Palatka for some relaxation from the tedium of military duty. They journeyed upriver on the steamer "City of Augusts" and were given a "cheering welcome" by "hundreds of townfolk" at the pier. After a march to the courthouse square, they toured the Hastings area observing the potato fields, and the orange groves around San Mateo.<sup>84</sup>

Another four hundred men came in March. This time, perhaps having heard of the attractions of the orange groves and potato fields, they brought with them two baseball teams and a brass band. The citizens provided them a lunch in the former warehouse of the Gay Brothers.<sup>85</sup>

A "Great Parade" was held in Palatka on April 12 in honor of the Liberty Loan Drive. Soldiers, two military trucks and Colonel Arthur and the Palatka "Minute Men" provided entertainment for the festivities.<sup>86</sup>

On the same day the churches of Palatka made public a resolution regarding the Sabbath, the gist of which was in two

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<sup>83</sup>Palatka Morning Post, January 29, 1918.

<sup>84</sup>Times-Herald, February 22, 1918.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., March 15, 1918.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., April 12, 1918.

paragraphs.

1. . . . that we gladly welcome the soldiers of Camp Johnston, or any other camp, in our city, and that we will do all we can to make their camp life pleasant but

2. . . . that we respectfully request those in authority at Camp Johnston not to allow the soldiers to come to Palatka on the Sabbath for the purpose of playing baseball or otherwise giving exhibition not in keeping with the proper observance of the Lord's Day.<sup>87</sup>

The Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian churches had formulated this resolution. The Palatka News and Advertiser supported their position in an editorial saying, "An orderly organization of citizens such as the old Ku Klux Klan is needed to handle traitors and spies."<sup>88</sup> Exactly what Mr. Russell meant by this is not clear.

At any rate a storm of protest ensued; the Times-Herald, on April 19, 1918, lamented, "The outside world has been led to believe that our city refused to entertain the soldier contingent from Camp Johnston last Sunday." Instead of coming to Palatka, a subsequent contingent of troops disembarked at Federal Point for their "rest and relaxation."

The council passed a resolution on Tuesday night declaring that the request forbidding troops to visit Palatka on Sunday should be revoked, saying " . . . Be it further Resolved, that the soldiers from Camp Johnston are hereby invited to visit the City of Palatka on Sundays or on any other occasions."<sup>89</sup>

This pressure emanated from the businessmen of Palatka

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, April 12, 1918.

<sup>89</sup>Times-Herald, April 19, 1918.

who may have been more concerned with economics than theology by doing so, and was reflected in an attendant incident. Someone instigated a "recent unpleasantness" by placing a German flag on the front door of the Earnest Company store. Mr. Earnest reacted by tearing ". . . the obnoxious emblem down and he burned it in the street." Mr. McKenzie continued, "Someone wanted to get even with Mr. Earnest for the part he took in the soldier Sunday observance matter, and accordingly the German flag was tacked to the door."<sup>90</sup>

As a demonstration of their loyalty, Palatkans organized the "Loyalty League" at the courthouse on April 16. S. J. Hilburn was elected president and Judge J. N. Blackwell as secretary of the group.<sup>91</sup>

One of the Camp Johnston soldiers wrote the Times-Herald and his letter was published on April 12, 1918.

Do not think for one moment that we blame THE PEOPLE, for we know from outside appearance that you are not at fault, but instead that 'sainted few' so called Christians, who deemed it their duty to look out for the welfare of their city.

. . . why should you class us all as 'bums' and 'trouble-seekers,' and turn us from your doors?

It is true that the church is judged by the lowest character in it, and so is the National Army. The reason for this is unknown to me and unfair to all. As a rule the one who forms such an opinion of a body of men, is, in my estimation, the most unworthy of all.

. . . I will rejoice with you, when I learn that you

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

have gotten rid of those 'patriotic few,' who are more interested in the other men's affairs than his own.

Boyd T. White  
39<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Motor Truck Company  
Jacksonville--Camp Johnston<sup>92</sup>

Another letter from Camp Johnston was published in the Times-Herald on April 26, 1918:

. . . I have to advise that this office has no objection to men visiting your city, but, due to present war conditions, it is not thought adviseable to order a body of men to any point.

F. E. Parker, Captain  
Quartermaster Corps, National Army  
Adjutant

A contingent of one hundred and sixty troops from Camp Johnston visited Palatka during May. They were met at the dock, paired off and taken to private residences where they enjoyed a meal and then departed. The whole experience lasted for two hours.<sup>93</sup>

The damage was done. Patriotic Palatka celebrated April 26 by placing flowers on the graves of Confederate troops in Westview Cemetery in "a pppropriate exercises" which included a prayer at the chapel in the cemetery.<sup>94</sup>

Another Liberty Loan rally held in May netted \$25,400,00. One thousand of this was donated by the United Daughters of the Confederacy which was initially raised for a memorial to ". . . the soldiers of Putnam County who fought in the 'Lost Cause.' "<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid., April 12, 1918.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., May 17, 1918.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., April 26, 1918.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., May 3, 1918.

The council subscribed five thousand dollars to the bond drive during the same month. The spirit extended to the Home Guards as well; they elected R. E. Neck as first lieutenant, H. M. Fearnaide as second lieutenant and J. G. Spencer as junior lieutenant.<sup>96</sup> The first project for the organization was to procure arms and uniforms.

The Guard was given a good start when the county commission gave it five thousand dollars in the middle of May. Company "A" received its rifles on May 31, 1918.<sup>97</sup> On July 4 the Guard raised a flag at the city hall, all decked out in their new uniforms, obtained the day before.<sup>98</sup>

A French flag was raised along with a new United States flag on July 14 in honor of Bastille Day, the day celebrated as Independence Day by France. The new flag pole was set in concrete eight feet deep and it cost seventy-five dollars.<sup>99</sup>

A war Savings Stamps parade was held on June 28; Miss Ona Davis portrayed the "Goddess of Liberty." Other highlights of the event included the burial of Kaiser Bill, borne in a casket carried by six naval officers, and a scene played by Charles Burt who assumed the role of "Rasputin, the Black Monk."<sup>100</sup>

On July 29 "lightless nights" resumed as part of the conservation of fuel program. This did not pertain to private

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., May 10, 1918.

<sup>97</sup>Palatka Morning Post, June 1, 1918.

<sup>98</sup>Times-Herald, July 5, 1918.

<sup>99</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1913-1918," p. 475.

<sup>100</sup>Palatka Morning Post, June 29, 1918.

homes, only businesses and streets except for areas where the lights were clustered on the poles. In that case, one of the cluster burned throughout the night. Daylight Savings Time was in effect and most businesses closed at six o'clock in the evening.

Two hundred and sixty men were to leave Putnam County on August 4 to fulfill the draft quota. This, according to the Palatka News and Advertiser, was sufficient "to form a company"; most of the men, said Editor Nerwich, ". . . are not only willing, but anxious to go." They were all Negroes.<sup>101</sup>

The patriotic spirit penetrated through to the school system in September when J. G. Spencer was paid forty dollars per month for drilling all boys from the seventh grade up for half an hour each morning.<sup>102</sup>

"Motorless Sundays" appeared in September at the request of the Federal Government, another example of the campaign to limit the domestic consumption of petroleum products.<sup>103</sup>

Palatka received notice of the death of its first white soldier in Europe, Bert Hodge, who was killed by an "exploding shrapnel shell" at Fismes, France, on August 10, 1918.<sup>104</sup> His body was found and buried by a cousin, Lew Barstow.<sup>105</sup>

The Post assumed, correctly, that the war would soon be over. On September 17 it editorialized that there should be no negotiated

<sup>101</sup> Palatka News and Advertiser, August 2, 1918.

<sup>102</sup> Palatka Morning Post, September 11, 1918.

<sup>103</sup> Times-Herald, September 13, 1918.

<sup>104</sup> Palatka News and Advertiser, April 25, 1918.

<sup>105</sup> Times-Herald, September 13, 1918.



peace with Germany, for, "It would be a covenant with hell, a partnership with infamy."<sup>106</sup> More editorial comment opposed to the armistice followed in November. Nerwich claimed, "To grant the Germans an armistice would necessitate the continuance of their present military strength."<sup>107</sup>

Another Liberty Loan Campaign, the " . . . biggest and best parade Palatka had" occurred in the last days of September. Lieutenant James G. Spencer, the Officer of the Day, served as marshal for the event. The parade was led by Miss Winifred Houghton astride a horse. There were nineteen units in the parade, the last of which was " . . . the surprise of the evening, the Ku Klux Klan."<sup>108</sup> The News referred to the organization as " . . . not so much needed now."<sup>109</sup>

The featured speaker was British Colonel J. T. W. Perowne who, in the shadow of a Statue of Liberty erected at the intersection of Lemon and Second Streets, glowing " . . . in the effulgence of strings of electric lights . . ." spoke to encourage Putnam to meet its quota of \$308,000.00.<sup>110</sup> The base of the statue had a plaque commemorating the death of Henry Gilbert Hodge, " . . . the only white soldier from Putnam to be killed in the war."<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>Palatka Morning Post, September 17, 1918.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., November 4, 1918.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., September 30, 1918.

<sup>109</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, October 4, 1918.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., April 25, 1919.

Credit was given those who contributed to the drive, and at the same time, chiding those who didn't, by publishing a list of donors in the Palatka Morning Post for October 28.

At three o'clock in the morning of November 12, the fire whistle began to blow continuously, arousing the residents who quickly learned of the armistice. Factory and locomotive whistles then joined to create a cacophony of sound enhanced by the firing of " . . . guns and pistols in all sections" of town. Color was added by flags and banners which were displayed everywhere. Mayor Merriam declared a holiday which resulted in all businesses closing at noon so as to allow everybody to participate in a " . . . big patriotic parade on Lemon Street" which precluded a rally on the courthouse lawn. The fire truck was " . . . noisily dashing through the city's streets . . ." and "Police regulations were suspended, and for once the old town was wide open."<sup>112</sup>

The only thing missing was a special edition of the papers proclaiming the peace.

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<sup>112</sup>Times-Herald, November 15, 1918.

## CHAPTER XVIII. PROGRESSIVES AND REACTIONARIES

It snowed on December 29, 1917, in Palatka. The temperature dropped to seventeen degrees and the Tilghman Hardware Company advertised snowshovels for sale on January 1.<sup>1</sup>

The courthouse was conquered on January 17, 1918, by Jack Williams, "The Human Fly." He achieved the feat at 3:30 p.m., scaling the outside wall with only his "fingers and toes." The stunt was done in part for charity; twenty per cent of the proceeds were donated to the Red Cross and ten per cent to the city library fund. The achievement was relatively insignificant, for Williams reputedly scaled the fifty-five story Woolworth Building in New York in two hours.<sup>2</sup>

Prohibition sentiment was bolstered by the "famous Anti-Saloonist" Doctor Madison Swadener of Indiana who spoke in Palatka on March 10 at the Baptist and Methodist churches. His efforts proved fruitful, for Putnam voted dry by a vote of three hundred and forty-six to two hundred and forty-nine in a state-wide referendum in November.<sup>3</sup>

The Buick Company used Palatka as a distribution point for the whole southeast area in April. Some six hundred cars arrived via the Florida East Coast Railway and were accommodated on platforms

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<sup>1</sup>Palatka Morning Post, January 1, 1918.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., January 17, 1918.

<sup>3</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, November 8, 1918.

erected on the lot across from the Negro schools. T. F. Barnett was agent for the company.<sup>4</sup>

The county commission considered a proposal to rebuild the jail, however the plan was rejected when it was determined that \$17,000.00 would be necessary to refurbish the structure. The commissioners rationalized that the jail was not used much and in the interest of economy ". . . it is good enough to house properly any guest the sheriff is likely to have during these dull times for sheriffs generally."<sup>5</sup>

A Spanish influenza epidemic developed in Palatka in October. Mayor Merriam proclaimed:

. . . all churches, schools, theatres, lodges and other places where people congregate, are hereby requested to close for the period of one week, commencing October 7, 1918.<sup>6</sup>

There were fifteen to twenty cases of influenza in the town on the day of the proclamation but this figure probably increased, for the quarantine was extended until November 2.<sup>7</sup>

The Putnam House changed hands again in April, 1918. The Putnam National Bank, which held the second mortgage on the property, purchased it for \$14,250.00.<sup>8</sup>

Palatka's veterans came home in April and a great welcome for them was scheduled for Saturday, the twenty-sixth. The

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<sup>4</sup>Palatka Morning Post, April 25, 1918.

<sup>5</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, August 9, 1918.

<sup>6</sup>Times-Herald, October 11, 1918.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., November 1, 1918.

<sup>8</sup>Palatka Morning Post, April 8, 1919.

festivities, to promote interest in a Victory Bond Drive, included the usual parade which featured a tank. A supper climaxed the festivities, segregated of course.<sup>9</sup> The city council voted to purchase fifteen hundred dollars worth of the bonds.

A new parking scheme was undertaken in May. Two lines were drawn down the center of Lemon Street and parking was to be confined to the area between the lines. The scene of the experiment was between First and Fourth Streets. If successful, the ordinance was to have been revised to accommodate the scheme. It wasn't.

Seldom did Putnam chastise one of its political leaders for their ideas, but in May, 1919, Representative H. S. McKenzie was attacked by the Palatka Morning Post for refusing to present two bills forwarded by the city council to the legislature for approval. McKenzie stated, "Palatka is already taxed heavily enough . . ." and wanted a referendum election held to determine the public's opinion of the tax increase of two mills, one of which would finance publicity for Palatka, and the other to support the municipal band.<sup>10</sup> Senator Russell supported the referendum idea. Perhaps McKenzie was singled out because of his affiliation with the Times-Herald (he was editor); the newspapers in Palatka often reflected a certain rivalry among the editors. After a meeting at the courthouse was held in order to demonstrate the public will, Senator Russell stated that there was ". . . no assurance that the views of the mass meeting

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<sup>9</sup>Palatka News and Advertiser, April 25, 1919.

<sup>10</sup>Palatka Morning Post, May 13, 1919.

reflected the views of the great body of people who would pay this tax."<sup>11</sup>

Education expanded to a nine month operation in June. Seven months of the term were to be financed for by the school board while the remaining two were to be underwritten by special school districts recently organized.<sup>12</sup>

July 4, 1919, was a disappointment. The scheduled boat races had to be cancelled because the river was choked with hyacinths.

A rash of vigilante activity marked the last quarter of 1919. One Ed Jones, a Negro had allegedly assaulted a girl in Duval County and was apprehended by Sheriff Boice of St. Johns County who called Sheriff Hagan in Putnam County and told him he was bringing Jones to Palatka for safekeeping because a lynch attempt was expected. Hagan told Boice, "You will do nothing of the sort. We have enough trouble of our own, and we don't propose to shoulder any of yours . . . ." Boice insisted he was coming anyway and Hagan reiterated, "Under no circumstances will I take Ed Jones and your trip will be for naught."<sup>13</sup>

At four o'clock Tuesday a convoy of seven cars carrying forty men from St. Augustine entered Palatka and were met by Hagan and Deputy Fernell who informed them that Jones was not in the local jail. They persisted, and five of the group were

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., May 18, 1919.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., June 18, 1919.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., September 10, 1919.

permitted to inspect the jail with Hagan. Jones was not in Palatka. After riding around town and then eating breakfast, the group left. They'd worn no masks according to the Post. Hagan told the reporter, in some contrast to his statement to Boice, "This is one of the most orderly counties in the state. Both races are absolutely at peace with each other . . . ." <sup>14</sup>

The orderliness came to an abrupt halt within three weeks. R. J. Butts, a conductor on a freight train, was reputedly shot by two Negroes who'd supposedly killed a man in Sanford and then fled to Palatka on Butts' train. Butts informed Sheriff Hagan and was shot assisting the sheriff in looking for the two men. He died in Jacksonville at St. Luke's Hospital.

While taking Butts to Jacksonville, Hagan received word that the two men were seen in Bostwick. Hagan, Chief Livingston and one Huguenin Wigg joined Deputy Lawrence and the four approached one man fitting the description, ordered him to stop and then opened fire when the suspect reached for a gun. The man, Andy Jackson, fell before he could get his gun from his pocket.

The other suspect, Nat Richards, was soon captured and admitted that Jackson had killed the man in Sanford. Richards was charged with killing Butts, who'd also wounded Richards in the chase in Palatka near the Georgia Southern and Florida Depot. He was taken to a jail where it was felt he'd be safe.

A mob entered Palatka looking for Richards on September 30. Its presence enraged Palatkans, especially because it apparently

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

came from out of town. The council was called into special session to determine how they entered the town and how such an act could occur. Alderman Coughlin stated that it was the:

. . . duty of the council to immediately discharge the officers responsible, and to continue to hire and fire men until the city can get a police force which could be depended upon.<sup>15</sup>

Officer Keene was singled out; he was charged with neglect of duty and a refusal to carry out orders.

The mob attacked an aged Negro preacher, and this was described as raising " . . . the ire of all present at the meeting." The council passed a resolution stating, "This disgraceful conduct will be met by a united force without stint or limit."<sup>16</sup> The preacher received medical attention at the expense of the city.

Sheriff Hagan returned to Palatka, after taking Richards elsewhere, at about three in the morning in time to hear shots being fired in the streets. He confronted the mob near the Union Depot and ordered it to disperse in five minutes. It did. They weren't completely satisfied however, until three of their members accompanied Hagan through the jail to prove that Richards was not there.

Richards was convicted of killing Butts on October 23. The violence stopped for the time.

On October 11, 1919, Goode M. Guerry and M. M. Vickers organized the Palatka Daily News, published each afternoon

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid. October 1, 1919.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.



except Sunday for fifteen cents per week.<sup>17</sup> This paper eventually became the standard bearer for reform in Palatka.

The city purchased the old Burt Home on the Heights, formerly used as a schoolhouse, and announced that it would refurbish the place for that purpose again.<sup>18</sup>

Palatka had no sugar in October. The sugar supply, mostly provided by Cuba, ran out, and the Sugar Equalization Board determined that until a new contract could be negotiated in January, Louisiana sugar would have to be used. The supply was limited, however, and the price rose to fifteen cents per pound in Palatka. Shortly, stocks were exhausted, but the sugar needs were met by using syrup.<sup>19</sup>

Education was boosted in January by the arrival of two hundred cadets of the Suwannee Military Academy on the third. Colonel Craven was headmaster of the school which was located in the Putnam House. There was a " . . . tremendous demand in Palatka for houses, flats or even rooming quarters . . ." for the cadets. The institution was one of six military academies in the country which was accredited by the United States Military Academy.<sup>20</sup>

Some of the subsistence for the cadets was provided locally, especially from the farm of C. A. (Gus) Dupont, a farmer at Hastings.

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<sup>17</sup>Palatka Daily News, October 11, 1919.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., October 13, 1919.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., January 3, 1920.

The academy made public the announcement that Palatka was only an interim location by stating in February that it would relocate at the conclusion of the current term. The town, according to spokesmen, could not offer a "proper site."<sup>21</sup> Not that Palatka didn't appreciate the academy's locating in town. In February, First and Second Streets were closed to traffic from the Florida East Coast track to Madison Street from 2:30 to 4:00 daily so as to provide a drilling area for the cadets.<sup>22</sup>

The term ended on May 31; thirty-four cadets were awarded diplomas at baccalaureate services highlighted by an address given by the Reverend H. D. Phillips, Chaplain of the University of the South. The cadets left immediately on a special train provided by the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway.<sup>23</sup> The school may have been discouraged in part because it could not obtain facilities to publish its own newspaper. The student news was contained in the Post after January 12.<sup>24</sup>

The News was optimistic about the academy's return in the fall, although it indicated Daytona and St. Petersburg were trying to attract the institution to those cities.

In the same column, the question was posed, less optimistic, of just what was to become of the Putnam House. The present lease expired in June and the Putnam National Bank was looking for someone to operate it. It was sold again in July to Dalton, Ferrell and Ferrell who intended to apartmentalize

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., February 17, 1920.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., February 4, 1920.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., May 31, 1920.

<sup>24</sup>Palatka Morning Post, January 12, 1920.

the structure.<sup>25</sup>

The winter of 1919-1920 saw two national figures come to Palatka for lectures. Champ Clark lectured at the Women's Club on December 31,<sup>26</sup> and on February 20, William Jennings Bryan spoke in favor of suffrage for women and national prohibition.<sup>27</sup> The Times-Herald declared that before the decade ended ". . . the white flag of purity and temperance would be flying over every nation on the globe."<sup>28</sup>

Editor Nerwich started a program of protest in September, 1919, when he pointed out that the railroads in Palatka owned twenty to thirty blocks of city land and controlled two thousand feet of the waterfront area within the city limits. He deplored the fact that the Ocala Northern had been given "whole streets" but didn't offer any suggestions as to how to rectify the situation. The trend towards a higher incidence of editorial protest would balloon during the following year however.<sup>29</sup>

One of the first items to be attacked was the antiquated "Palatka Code," which hadn't been revised since 1895. Somewhat satirically, Editor Guerry referred to the abolishment of the ordinance providing for the "slave market" and the "whipping post."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Palatka Daily News, July 7, 1920

<sup>26</sup> Palatka Morning Post, December 31, 1919.

<sup>27</sup> Palatka Daily News, February 20, 1920.

<sup>28</sup> Times-Herald, February 27, 1920.

<sup>29</sup> Palatka Morning Post, September 12, 1919.

<sup>30</sup> Palatka Daily News, February 4, 1920.

The council adopted a new code in 1920. This instrument did away with the slave market and whipping post, which dated back to the original charter of 1853. The ". . . committee felt that the council had a right to eliminate this clause from the charter," remarked Editor Guerry.<sup>31</sup>

In March the press gave much publicity to a recent visit by Governor Sidney J. Catts, who, in touring to Palatka via the "Rodman Road" declared it "a menace." He threatened that unless the county commission repaired the road, he would call it to Tallahassee to determine why. Catts wrote John Rodman, informing him that it was "the worst road he'd travelled over in a long while."<sup>32</sup> As a result of the road issue, Doctor A. M. Steen, chairman of the commission, resigned. Charles Burt was appointed to serve the remainder of Steen's term of office on March 29.

Apparently he wasn't able to rectify the situation right away, for an editorial in the News on June 16 stated, "Visitors say everywhere in Florida they go, road gangs are busy at work, except in Putnam County."<sup>33</sup> No succor would be realized for another year.

Disaster also visited Palatka during early 1920; the steamer "Osceola" rammed into the highway bridge during a storm and knowcked several piling loose. Vehicular traffic was ususpended until repairs could be made, and only foot passengers were allowed

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., March 27, 1920.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., March 24, 1920.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., June 16, 1920.

to cross the bridge.<sup>34</sup>

The storm brought a record amount of rainfall to Palatka. From noon Saturday until six Monday evening, a deluge of sixteen inches of rain fell, flooding fields, destroying the potato crop, and washing out roads and railroads. Repairs to the rails were made immediately, but the roads needed resurfacing badly. Repairs to the bridge were still underway on February 4.<sup>35</sup>

More optimistically, a rumore circulated on January 1 that the centennial celebration of the purchase of Florida would be held in Palatka.<sup>36</sup> It wasn't.

A campaign to raise \$25,000.00 for a library and museum was launched in February, commemorating the veterans of World War I from Putnam County. It was announced that four thousand dollars had already been pledged to the committee headed by R. F. Adams. The sites most favored were the courthouse square and the city hall park.<sup>37</sup>

A real boon occurred in March. Eight officials of the United Sugar Company, headed by A. F. Still man, toured the areas of Florahome and Hastings and were ". . . most impressed. At Florahome they will be shown the cylinders used by the

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., February 2, 1920.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., February 4, 1920.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., January 1, 1920.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., February 12, 1920.

Rolles Sugar Company at Florahome in 1772."<sup>38 & 39</sup>

Captain H. A. Johns of the sugar company came to Palatka in May to see the several cane fields that were planted and announced that a refinery would be built near Palatka.<sup>40</sup>

In August three thousand acres of land was purchased by the United Sugar Corporation in Putnam and St. Johns Counties, increasing the company's holdings to 10,000 acres, most of which was leased. Johns, now permanently in Palatka, would not yet say where the mill would be located, but Elkton, Florahome and Hastings were all possible sites.<sup>41</sup>

September provided the answer. On hundred acres of land on the east bank of the St. Johns River near the junction of the Palatka, Federal Point and Hastings roads was purchased by the sugar company. A mill was to be erected immediately and production would commence on October 21. This site was convenient to both the river and the Florida East Coast Railroad. Seed cane would be available to all those farmers interested in raising sugar. The farmer could realize as much as six hundred dollars per acre for his efforts.<sup>42</sup>

This speculation renewed the clamor for a new and separate Hastings County which would include the area of Elkton, Federal Point and Hastings with a population of four thousand persons.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., March 15, 1920.

<sup>39</sup> No evidence that there was a sugar mill operated at Florahome by Rolles has been uncovered.

<sup>40</sup> Palatka Daily News, May 8, 1920.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., August 10, 1920.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., September 7, 1920.

The refinery would be located in the proposed county.<sup>43</sup> St. Augustine feared that Hastings would undertake to join Putnam County if the proposal fell through. Guerry stated that Hastings was ". . . logically a part of Putnam."<sup>44</sup>

The project was doomed however, and this was readily recognized by the sugar company. The farmer simply refused to plant sugar. The undertaking was in danger of being halted for this reason as well as because "more flattering offers" had been given the corporation from the Okeechobee region.<sup>45</sup> Ultimately, these offers were taken.

By October, the Hastings farmers pledged only one hundred and forty acres to the planting of cane, but too little, too late. The corporation continued to encourage agriculturalists to plant cane and paid the expenses of G. W. Atkinson and T. M. Waldron to Louisiana to study cultivation practices there.<sup>46</sup>

More speculation was spurred by the interest shown the area by the American Sugar Cane Company which purchased four thousand acres of land in Flagler and Putnam Counties in October.<sup>47</sup>

Later in the month it was announced that José Cordona and Dominguez Papadega of Havana were bringing a hundred Cuban families to Palatka to work the cane fields.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., September 20, 1920.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., September 10, 1920.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., September 28, 1920.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., October 21, 1920.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., October 11, 1920.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., October 22, 1920.

The attention given the sugar issue shifted to Florahome in November; it was necessary to appeal to that area because not enough acreage in Hastings had been planted to keep the mill operating for " . . . more than a few days."<sup>49</sup>

Florahome farmers were not any more interested in planting cane than were those in Hastings, however, for no more mention was made of the sugar industry in that area.

The United Sugar Company advertised for bids for a spur track five-eighths of a mile long in November, and also for foundations for the mill and other buildings, including twelve employees' houses.<sup>50</sup>

Other industry interested in locating in Putnam County included an excelsior plant headed by A. J. Selle that was to open in August.<sup>51</sup>

Later in the month it was announced that the McGuire Phosphate Company was investigating the possibility of constructing a fertilizer plant in Palatka.<sup>52</sup> In July, the McGuire firm purchased the Peninsular Fertilizer Company and made plans to expand the operation. The plant originally belonged to the Savannah Fuel Company and was located in north Palatka near the Atlantic Coast Line Railway. The fuel company harvested peat from the property but caught fire and burned. Peninsular later

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., November 29, 1920.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., November 19, 1920.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., May 1, 1920.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., May 11, 1920.



rebuilt the factory.<sup>53</sup>

The Peninsular Oil Company established its general headquarters in Palatka in September. The firm was headed by M. O. Shaw, also president of the Georgia Lumber Company of Miami, and distributed Sun Oil products.<sup>54</sup> Gasoline cost 32 cents per gallon in November.

The old hospital (corner of Emmett and Kirkland) was sold in May to be divided into four apartments. The funds from the sale would be held in trust until a new hospital plan was developed.<sup>55</sup> Eight years passed before Doctors H. A. Johnson and G. M. Zeagler opened their private hospital at Division and Twigg Streets on August 11, 1928. It was referred to as the Glendale Terrace Hospital.<sup>56</sup>

In June, construction of a new railway bridge was underway. This bridge featured an electrically operated draw. Other railroad improvements included the laying of heavier track between Palatka and Valdosta to accommodate an increase in traffic which would relieve some of the congestion in Jacksonville.<sup>57</sup>

The "blind tiger" issue emerged again in February when a residence in "a prominent section" on River Street, in the Heights, was discovered in a two story house across the tracks. One white and one Negro man were operating three ten gallon

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., July 1, 1920.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., September 23, 1920.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., May 22, 1920.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., August 10, 1928.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., June 16, 1920.

stills. The white man was released on bond; the Negro was jailed.<sup>58</sup>

Editorial humor was exhibited in 1920 when reports from Federal Point were circulated describing a yellow "Manna from Heaven" as falling in the district. The residents disclaimed this however, stating that they ". . . already enjoy God's bounties." This left the question unanswered, and conjecture had it that perhaps it was ". . . sulfur knocked loose from a lightning bolt . . . ," or ". . . maybe an aeroplane dropped a sack of cornmeal." Further investigation eventually determined the cause to be pollen from certain types of vegetation carried about by the wind.<sup>59</sup>

In September Sheriff Hagan advertised an automatic pistol for sale. After several months of attempting to master the weapon he became ". . . convinced, finally, that he never will learn to operate it."<sup>60</sup> Shortly after acquiring the weapon he shot off the tip of his trigger finger. Before this healed, he shot through his shirt, ruining a twenty-eight jewel watch while practicing his "quick-draw." On September 1, while demonstrating the safety mechanism of the gun, it fired. Doctor Steen dove for more safety through the window, and the "Sheriff muttered to the court that . . . if he couldn't sell it, he'd give it away."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., February 9, 1920.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., February 14, 1920.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1920.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

On the political scene, Supervisor of Registration, Henis Peterman stated, ". . . persons registering for the primary election must take an oath that they will support the party nominee in the general election."<sup>62</sup> Perhaps the Socialists had something to do with this; they nominated W. L. Case of Palatka for United States Senator in the election of that year.<sup>63</sup>

A campaign to improve the water situation began in March. Neither of the water plants was capable of meeting the demands of Palatka and it was recommended by Guerry that the city do one of three things: first, purchase the old water plant; second, increase the capacity of the municipal water works; or third, install a water softener in the newer plant."<sup>64</sup>

The school children's march finally culminated in the construction of a new high school on the property donated by James R. Mellon several years earlier. The school was named in honor of Mellon and was dedicated in ceremonies held on March 18, 1921. The Palatka Community Service League organized the Community Music Club immediately following the ceremonies held in the auditorium. The club was conducted by Emerson Stone.<sup>65</sup> The school system had been strained to the breaking point however, for the "financial situation was desperate" according to the Daily News, and there had to be some relief from the state, or else ". . . all Florida schools would face closing."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., March 20, 1920.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., August 26, 1920.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., March 27, 1920.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., March 18, 1920.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., March 7, 1921.

The political situation blew up in Palatka's face during June. Much of the controversy stemmed from a gradual deterioration of the utilities function which disintegrated, in part, because the city engineer's office had been vacant for six months. The council paired off into two factions, the "progressives" and the "reactionaries" as Guerry expressed it, and the battle was on.

It started when the council shelved the idea of hiring a new engine, although it advertised for one. J. H. Randolph, the superintendent of public works, was powerless; "no one would carry out his orders."<sup>67</sup> The Committee on Streets and Water declared it was not necessary to hire an engineer, for the reason that ". . . all of the city's affairs and property are in good shape."<sup>68</sup> "Caustic discussion" ensued, reported Guerry; Alderman Rowton denounced the lack of an engineer and Alderman Usina retorted there was no need, as "all of the city affairs are running smoothly." He reasoned that the city had been without an engineer for six months and he saw no need in ". . . spending money for nothing."<sup>69</sup>

The city employees got in on the act. They quit. Their chief complaint was pay and they demanded three dollars and fifty cents per day. Guerry said, "There are no city laborers to superintend and all city work has come to a standstill."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid., June 16, 1920.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

Mayor Merriam got in on the act, holding that it was " . . . preposterous that a city the size of Palatka has no one charged with the obligation to look after its physical affairs."<sup>71</sup> The council lined up. Alderman Coughlin opposed employing an engineer; Dineen stated he favored it. Pursley supported Dineen. Browning supported Pursley, saying that a new jail was needed. A " . . . white man was permitted to die on the floor Monday afternoon under circumstances that reflected on the city."<sup>72</sup>

The council did agree that something needed to be done about the jail; "The building is in a bad condition of decay, the plumbing is out of order, and the place is filthy beyond description."<sup>73</sup>

Dineen added fuel to the fire by stating, "There should be something done about the whiteway."<sup>74</sup> He was referring to Palatka's downtown area which boasted streetlights.

After all of this, the only decision reached by the council during that particular meeting was that a call for bids was issued for street signs " . . . at those streets intersecting Lemon Street."<sup>75</sup>

The reactionaries had a tough row to hoe. In July the press picked up the fight. It declared the city water plant "crippled and inefficient" and supported the statement with the

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

opinion of George W. Simmons, the Chief Sanitary Engineer for the State Board of Health, who declared the water works to be " . . . badly in need of modification and renovation." He added, " . . . water softening chemicals were added without due regard for the actual requirements of the water."<sup>76</sup> The addition of too much lime resulted in clogged-up water pipes. Attempts to aerate the supply by forcing compressed air through them was declared to be " . . . uneconomical and practically useless. . . . Complaints of worms in the water have been prevalent. . . . The pumping equipment at the plant is in a crippled condition."<sup>77</sup>

To top it all off, the water works provided service to six hundred houses at an average rate of seven hundred and sixty gallons per day. This figure was much too high; the consumption, under this service, should not have exceeded four hundred gallons daily.<sup>78</sup>

On July 21, J. H. Randolph was hired as city engineer. Chalk one up for the progressives. His first act was to repair one of the pumps at the water works at a cost of over a thousand dollars. Water pressure increased to one hundred and twenty-five pounds per square inch at the firehouse and the increased pressure promptly blew out a main.<sup>79</sup>

Another problem had been alleviated a week earlier. Mayor

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., July 20, 1920.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., August 17, 1920.

Merriam warned the "joyrider and idler" to keep away from the fire truck when it was on call, or suffer the consequences. Those curiosity seekers only hampered the efforts of the firemen. Not all the difficulty lay with the on-lookers however. Merriam also directed the volunteer firemen to stay two blocks behind the truck; up to this time they'd usually arrived at the scene of the fire before the truck and because the roads were all sand, they parked their cars in the center so as not to get stuck, very effectively blocking the path of the fire truck and forcing the regular firemen to run " . . . several blocks to the fire."<sup>80</sup>

Much attention centered about Colonel S. J. Hilburn, an oil magnate from Palatka, whose second well just "came in" in Texas, producing twenty-four hundred barrels of oil per day.<sup>81</sup> His interests were extensive enough to warrant the emergence of a town in the vicinity of the oil field in Eastland County and it was named for the colonel. His third and fourth wells were producing by November.

The foundation for the new Negro hospital was laid at the corner of Lemon and Fifteenth Streets in August.<sup>82</sup>

Women's suffrage received the support of Editor Guerry on August 19; after adoption of the amendment, the registration books of Putnam were opened to the gentle sex on September 7. The first five to register were: Miss Clara Bart; Mrs. T. B.

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., August 9, 1920.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., July 17, 1920.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

Merrill; Miss Mildred Pierce; Mrs. Zona Van Horne; and Miss Edith Kupperbusch.<sup>83</sup> The News reported on the tenth that less than a hundred women had registered by that date.

Mrs. H. H. Van Horne was Palatka's, and Putnam's, first female officeholder. She was appointed as Supervisor of Sanitation on October 5, 1920. She was also chairman of the Women's Club Civic Committee. Alderman Cochrane gave her an initial project by deploring " . . . the practice of swill wagons collecting garbage from the hotels and restaurants and then carting it through streets with no covers on the wagon. It slops out with disgusting effect on the street . . . and leaves an unsavory odor."<sup>84</sup>

The first female to hold a county position was Mrs. E. P. Carpenter who was appointed to serve the unexpired term of Tax Collector Randall Wells who resigned. Mrs. Carpenter was appointed on March 18, 1931.<sup>85</sup>

"Canova Corner" (Lemon and Second Streets), the "most prominent corner in Palatka," was sold in September to its lessees, B. Goraib and N. and G. Kortas for \$35,000.00. T. J. Knight instigated the transaction.

Canova had purchased the three story brick structure "several years ago" for eight thousand dollars; it was constructed by M. I. Keen just after the fire of 1884. The ground floor was occupied by Goraib's Blue Jacket Fruit Store and the Dixie

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., September 7, 1920.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., October 6, 1920.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., March 19, 1931.



Grocery and Meat Market. A number of attorneys had offices on the second floor and the third floor was vacant.<sup>85</sup>

Guerry charged that some councilmen were receiving free electricity from the Southern Utilities Company.<sup>86</sup> The charge was denied by Manager Emmons Graham.<sup>87</sup> Palatka's papers continued to pressure for better government.

Another charge was levied against the county commissioners in October. It concerned the bridge; "A great many people have been riding free," claimed the News in singling out the misuse of the annual pass ticket. Guerry claimed the pass system should be scrapped and the maintenance of the bridge should be provided for by the county commission. One commissioner, W. F. Glynn, favored the proposal and carried it further by stating, "I should like to see all the toll bridges in the County made free."<sup>88</sup> Three days later the commissioners inaugurated a program to check on the use of the passes issued for crossing the bridges.

The Rotarians launched a campaign to change the name of Lemon Street as September closed. They offered a ten dollar prize to the school pupil coming up with " . . . the most appropriate name."<sup>89</sup> Their argument was, "The name does not signify anything in Palatka's history further than that many years ago

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid., September 17, 1920.

<sup>86</sup>The Southern Utilities Company opened its doors for business in 1917.

<sup>87</sup>Palatka Daily News, September 22, 1920.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., October 4, 1920.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., September 28, 1920.

some sour lemon trees were planted on the street for their shade."<sup>90</sup> Howell Davis was the person to whom suggestions were to be sent.

One hundred and one children entered the contest. The Rotary chose "Putnam" as the winner, submitted by six pupils. Runner-ups were "St. Johns," but that sounded " . . . too much like St. Johns County;" "Popular;" "Mellon;" and "Central."<sup>91</sup>

Charles E. Rowton claimed a change was necessary because " . . . people make fun of Palatka because its principle business street had such a 'simp' name."<sup>92</sup>

That did it. The opponents of the change howled, "The fact that some wag elects to make a joke out of the name of the street is no reason why, after sixty-five years, it should be changed and cause confusion."<sup>93</sup>

Guerry had no opinion. The council referred the matter to the next meeting. The reactionaries pulled off a victory for the name remained the same.

The Palatka "Jobbers," officially known as the Palatka Wholesale Grocer's Association, held its first annual banquet at the Women's Club on September 25. Its president was C. C. Hudson, and A. R. Haile was the vice-president.

The bridge question arose again in October. Putnam County would decide in the November elections just what to do regarding

<sup>90</sup>Ibid.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., October 12, 1920.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., October 15, 1920.

the toll. Support for its removal came from the Southern Utilities Company which received authorization to run a powerline to East Palatka on the structure. In return, the company would light the bridge free of charge.<sup>94</sup> The issue regarding the toll was later deleted from the ballot however; there were "too many obstacles" according to the News.<sup>95</sup>

A raid by Sheriff Hagan near Orange Mills netted one thousand three hundred and eight quarts of liquor, estimated value of which was \$15,000.00. The confiscation, on October 8, was to be destroyed. The owners could not be identified. Few people were really interested in destroying the booty, for on October 27, it was still in the custody of the sheriff. It was then determined it would have to be disposed of before the November election, but the reluctance to do so still lingered. Palatka's physicians felt that it was ". . . too bad, we could use it here in the event of another influenza epidemic."<sup>96</sup> The question of "Who shall be the custodian?" still lingered however. Ultimately it was poured out behind the jail.

The Putnam House opened for the first time in over a year in November. It was now managed by M. D. Hubbel and I. D. Hubbies. Hubbel had been a steward in the hotel while it housed the Suwannee Military Academy.<sup>97</sup> Two hundred rooms were open, thirty of which rented for one dollar per day.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., October 5, 1920.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., October 27, 1920.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., November 8, 1920.

<sup>98</sup>Palatka Morning Post, January 4, 1921.

The second annual celebration of the Armistice was held on November 19. A parade at eleven o'clock was followed by a football game, a band concert, an automobile raffle, a basketball game and a dance at the Putnam House. The streets resounded with revelry and were covered with confetti for the occasion.<sup>99</sup>

As Christmas approached, Palatka attempted to instill the spirit of giving in the young. The Christmas Tree Fund was launched to provide for those less fortunate. It failed. Eventually the business element donated thirteen hundred dollars to the cause to keep it from collapsing.<sup>100</sup>

Sensationalist reporting was demonstrated by the headline of the Palatka News and Advertiser on Christmas Eve with "Santa Claus Held Up; Beats Off Thugs." The incident occurred near Chicago and it was reported that the old gentleman was on his way from Chicago to Palatka when attacked, but, the paper consoled, he would arrive in Palatka in time for Christmas.

The sugar issue was renewed in January when it was reported that one hundred and seventeen families of Portuguese descent were coming to the area to work in the cane fields. Ultimately, this number would increase to five hundred families. Another report related to the purchase of " . . . several thousand acres of the Shell Bluff area."<sup>101</sup> General Pose Armande was bringing fifty Cuban families to work his holdings. Neither of these materialized, for the United Sugar Corporation relocated in the Okeechobee area the following year.

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<sup>99</sup>Palatka Daily News, November 20, 1920.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., December 24, 1920.

<sup>101</sup>Times-Herald, February 4, 1921.

Billy Sunday, the evangelist, visited Palatka during the end of February. He addressed the Palatka High students.

G. Loper Bailey filed suit against the Board of Public Instruction in March. He claimed title to block fifty-three, purchased by the school board in 1913 from the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

Carrying his argument back to 1539 when De Soto "passed through Palatka," he justified Spain's claim to Florida. In 1816 the king presented the area to Bernardo Segui, a "favorite soldier." Segui established, according to Loper, the trading post at New Buena Vista, located on the west bank of the St. Johns River.<sup>102</sup> Later the place was known as "Grey's Landing," named for Joseph Gray who had a trading post at the foot of Lemon.<sup>103</sup> Bailey then claimed the "royal absolute grant" was ratified by the treaty ceding Florida to the United States in 1822. (Florida was ceded in 1821 and all claims were reviewed by the United States Commissioners in St. Augustine for this area.)

Segui then sold the plat to Belton Copp who sold it to Nehemiah Brush who died in New York in 1843, leaving the estate to two executors, Issac Bronson and Benjamin Putnam. This plat included all one thousand two hundred twenty and three-tenths acres of what is now Palatka, except for twenty-eight lots sold by Brush before he died. These lots were in the vicinity of

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<sup>102</sup> See above. New Buena Vista was on the east bank.

<sup>103</sup> Grey was a landholder of Palatka, but his grant was north of town. It is not known that he was a trader.

the "Flatiron Building," a structure so-called because of its flat roof, located on the bank of the river. The executors sold the tract to the Reid Company and what remained of it passed on to Reid's partners, George Burt and a man named Carr. The land passed thence to the Florida Commercial Company which mortgaged it to Jacob Edwards. The latter's heirs fought a foreclosure suit in 1915 and sold lot fifty-three to Bailey for fifteen hundred dollars. The Atlantic Coast Line sold the same block to the school board for fifty-three hundred dollars and now Bailey claimed it.<sup>104</sup>

This was too much for the court and Bailey's claim was struck down.

The population of Palatka Heights increased to eleven hundred and thirty-eight souls by 1920 and the influx of residents changed the attitude regarding annexation to Palatka.

In early April it was reported that the Heights now favored annexation; a meeting at the home of Captain J. H. Randolph substantiated the editor's claim.<sup>105</sup> Among other factors considered were the possible purchase, by Palatka, of the old water plant. The watershed for the newer plant was also in the Heights and the conveniences of sanitation facilities as provided

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Little is known of the political structure of Palatka Heights; the record books have long since disappeared. The only information uncovered relative to office holders refer to the years 1918 and 1920.

In 1918 the mayor was H. A. Atwater. The Aldermen included Frank J. Cameron, S. G. Coburn, J. G. Fischback, S. Q. Porter, and Frank A. Sands. Times-Herald, April 5, 1918.

The officials in 1920 were: Mayor J. H. Randolph, Jr.;

by the parent city, not to mention police and fire protection and lights and streets, also supported the annexation argument. The only real opposition came from an individual named Frank Sands.<sup>106</sup> Sands operated an electric supply store in Palatka.

The spring elections followed in two weeks. Palatka elected H. M. Fearnside mayor over Doctor A. M. Steen by a vote of 302--64 and all seven wards favored, by a vote of one hundred and sixty-three to forty, the purchase of the old water works for \$125,000.00<sup>107</sup> Of this, \$40,000.00 was to be used to link the two plants together and any surplus funds would be used for the street paving program.<sup>108</sup>

Now the watershed in the Heights became an even greater issue. In May however, the opponents to annexation came up with a monkey wrench in the form of Palatka's indebtedness of \$165,000.00. Taxation had finally come to the Heights; exclusive of taxes paid by the water company, the residents paid all of eighty-six dollars on a total assessed evaluation of \$150,000.00 for the previous year. Palatka countered by offering \$30,000.00 in improvements such as streets and sidewalks, but J. N. Blackwell, a lawyer, went to Tallahassee anyway, to argue the legality of the opponents' claim.<sup>109</sup>

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and Aldermen S. G. Coburn, Edward Gerber, S. Q. Porter, F. B. Price, and Frank Sands. Palatka Daily News, April 7, 1920.

As a result of the annexation to Palatka, Palatka Heights was represented on the council by four aldermen.

<sup>106</sup> Palatka Morning Post, April 8, 1921.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., April 9, 1921.

<sup>108</sup> Palatka Daily News, April 19, 1921.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., May 19, 1921.

Attempts to review the tax records of the Heights were frustrated on May 20, 1921. Frank Sands took the records and minutes of the council and locked them in his store in Palatka according to F. B. Price, the Heights' clerk. Sands, former Mayor Atwater and two Negroes were the only citizens paying taxes and these funds would be depleted when Blackwell was reimbursed for his expenses incurred during the trip to Tallahassee stated Price. This amounted to fourteen dollars more than the town collected from private individuals by taxation.<sup>110</sup>

A month later Sands was reported missing. He left at four o'clock in the morning on Saturday, June 11, for parts unknown.<sup>111</sup>

The annexation subject would reappear again, but in the light of other developments, it was far overshadowed for the moment.

One diversion was violence. In March the Hastings Herald carried a half-page ad written by the Ku Klux Klan. It read in part: "WARNING. Any man, white or colored, who commits a crime or creates disorder will regret the day he ever heard of Hastings. (signed) Ku Klux Klan."<sup>112</sup>

The Klan missed a chance to carry out its threat to maintain law and order in May. On the first an unidentified Negro was shot by Earnest Reed, a potato farmer in Hastings, who discovered the stranger among his laborers at eight-thirty Sunday

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<sup>110</sup>Ibid., May 19, 1921.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., June 14, 1921.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., March 28, 1921.



morning while giving work instructions for the day. The man refused to leave when Reed ordered him to do so, and made a movement toward his breast. Reed anticipated this to be an attempt to produce a weapon, drew his own gun and shot him. No charges were made by the law " . . . who, after an investigation, gave him his liberty."<sup>113</sup> There was no mention of the Negro's having a weapon of any kind. Perhaps the Klan didn't consider this a violation of the law.

A "gun battle" occurred at the corner of Madison and Tenth Streets in Palatka at two-thirty in the morning on April 5. Deputy Sheriff Jernigan spotted a prowler and, joined by officers Fennell and Green, accosted Charles Williams, Negro, and arrested him on a charge of suspicion of theft.

On May 11 Fennell shot at a burglar five times with a double-barrelled shotgun loaded with buckshot. Fennell was staked out in some bushes in the yard of Thomas Holden on North Third, attempting to capture the party or parties responsible for a recent series of burglaries in the north section of town. He was only one of several individuals maintaining a vigil in several parts of Palatka.

Fennell witnessed an attempted break-in at the residence of James Martin at one-thirty a.m., and when he shouted stop, the individual, garbed in "woman's clothing," fled. The policeman then opened fire, but failed to sight anything " . . . because the smoke was so thick he couldn't see."<sup>114</sup> The burglar got away.

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<sup>113</sup>Ibid., May 3, 1921.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1921.

Moments later, Mrs. Dutton, living in the Brown apartments in Mulholland Park, heard someone trying to break in downstairs. George Hilty, who lived nearby, observed a shadowy figure near the Dutton apartment and opened fire with a pistol from his bathroom window, blasting away at anything that moved. Mrs. Dutton claimed she heard a groan and then a noise, but the police felt Hilty hadn't hit his target because he admitted he'd never actually seen him.<sup>115</sup>

Later, the body of a Negro was found, dressed in a baggy pair of overalls. The man was still alive and admitted to Reverend Ellison that he had thoughts of breaking into the Martin residence but changed his mind. He stated that he was Charlie Herbert, recently escaped from Raiford prison after having been convicted on a burglary charge in Tampa.<sup>116</sup> His pockets contained a pair of pliers, a knife and several keys. Herbert had been hit twice, but survived and was returned to Raiford.<sup>117</sup>

The indiscriminate firing of Hilty prompted the mayor to urge all citizens to remain inside their homes if they heard "a disturbance;" it just could be the law they were firing at.<sup>118</sup>

Natural violence preceded this act. A "cyclone" struck East Palatka on May 17 at 12:45 p.m. and took the lives of two persons. The body of Celia Williams was blown two hundred feet and a house was blown nearly a quarter of a mile into the bay by

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<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., May 21, 1921.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

winds reported as high as one hundred miles per hour. The greatest damage was in the Lee Hardy "quarters," a Negro housing section near Browning's Lumber Mill.<sup>119</sup>

The summer brought another violent incident in the latter part of August. Deputy Sheriff J. R. Payne, also marshal of Hastings, was taken to some woods in the Tocol area by six men and beaten with a two inch wide leather strap "several feet long" by five of them. He was ordered to leave the state by Wednesday or he'd be killed. The mob wanted his removal because he had been " . . . interferring with our whiskey business . . . ."<sup>120</sup> Stripping him, they'd each given him five or six lashes and took all his belongings before leaving him. He eventually found his way back to the highway and home. He left Hastings, but moved only as far as Jacksonville where he took a position as detective for a railroad company. He swore out warrants for those who beat him, but refused to testify against them in court.<sup>121</sup>

The violence subsided for the duration of the year.

The attention shifted to a campaign to remove the seat of government from Tallahassee to Palatka in April. The Daily News headlined "Gem City Going After Capital" on April 27. A meeting was held in the high school auditorium to discuss the possibility of getting the legislature to amend a bill it was contemplating that would make Palatka a contender for the new site.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., May 17, 1921.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., September 1, 1921.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid., September 28, 1921.

Sample arguments were, "Palatka is directly accessible from all sections of the state," and "The ideal spot was in Palatka Heights."

The movement was instigated by Goode M. Guerry, editor of the News. The Tampa Daily Times circulated a petition among all newspapers in Florida relative to a bill which was before the legislature requesting that \$250,000.00 be appropriated for expansion of the capitol facilities in Tallahassee. Eighty-six of the papers responded; Guerry indicated initially that he favored Ocala because it had been recommended by the last State Democratic Convention. He also felt the city to which the capital would remove should make up the difference between the amount realized from the sale of the present government holdings and the cost of the new site.<sup>122</sup>

Senator Russell was conducive to amending the bill before the legislature to include Palatka among the cities to be considered for the relocation, the others being Orlando and Tallahassee.

The next day a committee left for Tallahassee to "PUSH PALATKA'S CLAIM" as the Daily News expressed it. C. H. Kennerly and W. J. Tilghman comprised this committee.<sup>123</sup>

H. S. McKenzie spurred Palatka into thinking the capital should relocate there. Representative Williams of Leon County added an amendment to the appropriations bill to require the legislature to submit a resolution to the public before the

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<sup>122</sup>Ibid., May 31, 1921.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., April 28, 1921.

decision was made. Representative McKenzie initially informed President H. M. de Montmollin of the Businessmen's Association that the appropriation passed without the amendment and the relocation issue was a dead one. This, according to the Daily News, was not true; the Palatka offer was still being considered, and the campaign intensified.<sup>124</sup>

The first step was to organize the Capital Removal Club. Judge E. E. Haskell was elected president and J. C. Calhoun and Frank D. Wattles as first and second vice-presidents respectively. Clarence Kennerly was the secretary and H. O. Hamm the treasurer. The new organization declared that if the capital were relocated in Palatka it would be a " . . . convenience and economy to the state as a whole."<sup>125</sup> Representatives of the newly formed pressure group were sent to Ocala, Orlando, and Tallahassee to point out Palatka's advantages.

This committee inaugurated what was referred to as the "Harmony Campaign" which consisted of the Palatka delegation's requesting Ocala and Orlando to make an offer equivalent to that of Palatka's.<sup>126</sup>

The committee never really got off the ground. S. J. Hilburn, one member of the committee designated to go to Tallahassee, couldn't; he wasn't in town, and no one went to the capital. J. V. Walton, another member, was also unable to

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<sup>124</sup>Ibid., May 8, 1921.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., May 10, 1921.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., May 12, 1921.

leave.<sup>127</sup> The Ocala committee didn't go either.<sup>128</sup>

Orlando fed the fires of optimism, however, when that town agreed to support the removal agreement and then later decide on a specific site.

The issue lay until September when at a Kiwanis luncheon, it was stated by the featured speaker, Senator James E. Calkins, that the capital would be moved and that Palatka should "push hard" for the site.<sup>129</sup>

Time took the temper from the issue. By December Ocala and Palatka were on the defensive, protesting the award of contracts by the state totalling \$250,000.00 to expand the facility in Tallahassee. The News stated that an injunction would be sought, and that other towns, Daytona, Gainesville, Miami, Orlando, Tampa and West Palm Beach, supported the cry for it.<sup>130</sup>

On December 15, Senator W. A. Russell of Putnam County killed the whole campaign by stating that the only way the capital could be moved out of Tallahassee would be to reapportion the legislature.<sup>131</sup>

This defeat took the steam out of Palatka's progressivism for a time, but it would emerge once again during the following year.

Marine developments during 1921 witnessed only one

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., September 22, 1921.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., December 14, 1921.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., December 15, 1921.

innovation; the steamer "St. Johns" began plying the river between Jacksonville and Palatka, carrying mostly freight in the form of potatoes. Described as a long, low, graceful vessel, it was propeller driven and boasted two five hundred horsepower engines which powered the one hundred and eighty-five foot craft. Its beam was thirty-two feet and it had a capacity of two hundred and fifty tons.<sup>132</sup>

The only new buildings erected in Palatka during 1921 were the Masonic Lodge, located on the corner of Water and Lemon Streets;<sup>133</sup> the Smith Building on Lemon and Smith; and the Shelley Building on Lemon between Fourth and Fifth. The latter two, constructed of brick, were completed in July.<sup>134</sup>

Civic additions included the purchase of the Anna Bart property on the Heights for use as a park. The price paid by the council was ninety-five hundred dollars.<sup>135</sup>

In June J. R. Mellon donated a bronze plaque dedicated to the memory of the veterans of World War One. He also provided funds to pay for one-fourth of the cost of the granite base for the memorial which would be erected on the courthouse square.<sup>136</sup>

The county commission began discussion of a new bridge across the river in May. This was the initial effort to construct a modern highway bridge that would take five years to realize.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., March 22, 1921.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1921.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid., July 8, 1921.

<sup>135</sup>Times-Herald, June 24, 1921.

<sup>136</sup>Ibid., July 1, 1921.

In August another short-lived attempt to publicize Palatka occurred in the form of the Palatka Businessmen's Association. Fifty persons attended the organizational meeting at which W. P. Merriam was elected president. Goode M. Guerry and R. C. Richard were chosen first and second vice-presidents respectively. The secretary was F. D. Wattles, and A. L. Teaff was chosen treasurer.<sup>137</sup>

A week later the group was reorganized as the Chamber of Commerce. A committee of Howell Davis, E. L. Mann and Earnest Rowton drew up the constitution and Goode M. Guerry suggested the new name.<sup>138</sup>

The organization got right down to basics immediately. J. W. Hart was employed as the first executive secretary in September.<sup>139</sup> A membership drive commenced the following week with an ultimate goal of three hundred members.<sup>140</sup>

One of the first activities in which the chamber took part was the campaign to improve roads in the county. Talk of a unified road district for all of Putnam commanded official attention as early as May when the county commissioners toyed with the idea.<sup>141</sup>

The automobile itself began to receive more attention as a means of transportation available to more people. The several dealers in Palatka advertised in nearly every paper; one

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<sup>137</sup>Palatka Daily News, August 3, 1921.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid., August 10, 1921.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid., September 6, 1921.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., September 13, 1921.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid., May 4, 1921.



automobile company advertised that its cars were built in Jacksonville. Henry L. Innes, President of the American Motors Export Company, appealed to Floridians by stating that his car, the Innes Touring Car, was "Built in Jacksonville."<sup>142</sup>

Two large "motorcades" were held in October and November. The first consisted of one hundred cars that toured to Hastings, led by Grand Marshal John Q. Tilghman.<sup>143</sup> Another tour followed in November when a group headed by the Palatka Concert Band (in their new uniforms) went to Jacksonville to participate in the state fair. This particular excursion had been organized by Hart, the chamber secretary.<sup>144</sup>

A week later the Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis and the Rotary initiated the "Good Roads Program." The goal was "hard surfaced roads" for the whole county, not just within the existent road districts. F. J. Fearnside was its first chairman and a bond issue was discussed as being the only means by which the money to undertake the expansion could be obtained.<sup>145</sup>

The body of Bert Hodge arrived in Palatka on August 6. Services were held in the Presbyterian Church for Palatka's war hero and internment followed at the Oak Hill Cemetery with a cortege of the recently formed American Legion Post, named for Hodge, conducting military honors. Mayor Fearnside requested all

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<sup>142</sup>Ibid., July 8, 1921.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid., October 20, 1921.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., November 15, 1921.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., November 22, 1921.

citizens to remain within the city limits during the services.<sup>146</sup>

Mellon's bronze tablet was dedicated during the Armistice Day celebration in ceremonies held at the courthouse. Judge A. V. Long of the circuit court introduced the featured speaker, Governor Hardee. A parade began at 10:30 and an estimated five thousand persons attended the highlights of the day which included a football game.<sup>147</sup>

The need for a new hospital was succinctly pointed out in December when an accident at Rodman resulted in a "young white man" having had his arm amputated. It was ". . . necessary to keep him in the negro hospital of this city . . . ." declared J. V. Walton, who also commended the Negro community for raising funds to build their own hospital. The Kiwanis Club took up the challenge and a fund was started for a new facility; D. W. Ramsaur was chairman of the "Hospital Committee."<sup>148</sup>

The Putnam House caught fire on December 10. It started in a faulty water heater and was confined primarily to the walls of the south wing. Great billows of smoke caused the most damage stated Chief Phillips, although the fire itself was quite small.<sup>149</sup> The beginning of the end for the hotel started. In seven months Palatka's greatest landmark would be no more.

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<sup>146</sup>Ibid., August 7, 1921.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid., November 12, 1921.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., December 8, 1921.

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., December 10, 1921.

## CHAPTER XIX. REALIZATION OF REFORM

The violence started again in January. Two Negroes were reported as "terrorizing Fairview" and had been cornered in an abandoned house. Sheriff Hagan set fire to the house to drive them out. They fled, firing as they did so, grazing the sheriff once. The rumor spread that Hagan was dead and Deputy Cannon wounded. Palatkans armed themselves and set out for Fairview, near Peniel, in the true vigilante spirit. When they saw the house burning another rumor developed, this dealing with a Negro insurrection.<sup>1</sup>

The county was sued for one thousand dollars by Mrs. Jessie Ellis Mitchell in March, 1923, for the damage to her property as a result of Hagan's firing the place.<sup>2</sup>

Early in February, N. A. Stumpe, speaking for the Masons, charged the county commission with permitting white and Negro convicts to occupy the same quarters in a prison camp. This was ". . . contrary to state law . . ." declared Stumpe, and he charged also that "kangaroo courts" in the prison were conducted by the Negro convicts who forced whites to pay fines and subjected them to whippings when the fines were not paid.

Superintendent James Grainger denied the claims and then, in anger, left the meeting. Deputies Cannon and Knight declared

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<sup>1</sup>Times-Herald, January 27, 1922.

<sup>2</sup>Palatka Daily News, March 7, 1923.

that the charge was true and Grainger knew nothing of the incident because it occurred while he was away from the camp.<sup>3</sup>

In June the Ku Klux Klan held an initiation ceremony at the ball park. "Hundreds of Palatkans were in attendance," according to the Times-Herald. Two hundred Klansmen from "near-by towns" conducted the rites which brought thirty initiates to the ranks. The ceremony, held on June 7, took an hour, during which time " . . . perfect order prevailed."<sup>4 & 5</sup>

The next publicized Klan activity occurred in September when it was reported that certain "irregularities" were being "regulated" by the "local Ku Klux Klan." One vice in particular was singled out; " . . . nocturnal joyriding and attendant parking of cars in secluded spots will not be so popular from henceforth."<sup>6</sup>

Much more attention was given the Klan on its "Charity Mission" of October 15. Just before Reverend J. D. Sibert began his evening sermon in the Methodist Church, six white-robed Klansmen entered the sanctuary and paused in the rear of the room to attract attention. Reverend Sibert noticed them and proclaimed to his congregation, "We are about to have visitors," and asked the worshippers to rise.<sup>7</sup>

The six walked down the aisle and presented Sibert with an

<sup>3</sup>Times-Herald, February 10, 1922.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., June 9, 1922.

<sup>5</sup>Palatka's papers pointedly avoided any mention of extremist activity on the part of the Klan, and for that matter, only several references to the organization can be found.

<sup>6</sup>Times-Herald, September 22, 1922.

<sup>7</sup>Palatka Daily News, October 16, 1922.

envelope. He opened it and read the enclosed message addressed to him:

Reverend J. D. Sibert, pastor Methodist Church, Palatka, Florida.

Esteemed sir: This sign having ever at heart the furtherance of the Master's cause, especially as with regard to the Protestant faith, and being in hearty sympathy with the efforts of your people to complete an edifice that will better enable you to accomplish good, be an honor to our city and reflect the glory of the living God--we take great pleasure in handing you herewith a small contribution (\$50.) to your building fund. Assuring you of our highest regard for yourself personally and for your people collectively, we are most respectfully, Putnam Klan No. 13, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>8</sup>

In this incident the local Klan identified itself and championed the anti-Catholic cause of the 1920 Klan movement. It was not the first occasion on which a Klan donation had been given to a cause; during the previous year, they gave fifty dollars to the school board to alleviate, in part, a financial deficit.

Reverend Sibert quieted the congregation which responded with " . . . a murmur of approval," and then offered a prayer of thanks. The six delegates then removed themselves from the church, having uttered not one sound throughout the incident. The letter was placed in a tin box and was to be deposited in the cornerstone of the new church.<sup>9</sup>

William Morgan, a Palatka grocer, was beaten and robbed in November; he died without recovering consciousness and could not identify his attacker, but Tom Welch, his deliveryman, was picked

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

up and charged with the assault. Welch was accosted the day after the crime while driving the delivery truck. He was bound over to the circuit court which established an eight thousand dollar bond. Unable to pay it, he was jailed to await the assembly of the grand jury in the spring.<sup>10</sup> No further publicity was given the incident.

William Jennings Bryan addressed the Rotary Club on "Rotary and Its Responsibilities" and also the high school students on "Opportunities" in February, 1922. He was on his way to New York to speak in opposition to the teaching of Darwinism in the school systems.<sup>11</sup>

The Putnam House changed hands for the last time in April. Doctor L. W. Warren, President of the Palatka Development Company, purchased the hotel from O. D. Dalton and E. D. and C. W. Ferrell during the middle of the month. The intention was to raze the structure.

J. J. Murphy was in charge of selling the furniture and salvageable material which was to commence immediately. The Times-Herald probably expressed the general consensus of opinion by saying that the building has ". . . gradually gone into such disfavor as to be a fire trap . . . . Its removal should tend to reduce insurance rates--here's hoping at any rate."<sup>12</sup>

The razing began in July. An advertisement in the Daily News offered all fixtures and furniture for sale and by the end

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<sup>10</sup>Times-Herald, December 22, 1922

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., February 24, 1922.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1922.

of the month the job was nearly complete.<sup>13</sup> On August 4 it was stated that there were no future plans to develop the lot, but on August 20, Doctor Steen predicted, ". . . another structure would be completed within ninety days."<sup>14</sup>

The last wall was pulled over at 8:50 a.m. on August 20, 1922. No one was particularly sorry to see it happen. Mike Phillips said, "The fire boys had less chance for a free feed," now that the hotel was gone, and Jules McCrocklin offered only that its ". . . destruction only shortened the policemen's beat."<sup>15</sup>

Palatka's tourist era came to a slow, grinding, but complete halt as far as facilities were concerned. The old hotel still lingered as a controversy however. In December an issue arose in the council regarding the great amount of trash still on the lot. The question was raised, "Is the Hotel torn down?"<sup>16</sup> Ultimately part of one wing of the Putnam House was incorporated into the Hotel Neptune at Daytona Beach. The structure was re-named the Park Hotel.<sup>17</sup>

The great controversy in Palatka's history occurred in

<sup>13</sup>Part of one of the bars is in the establishment of Henry's, just inside the Putnam County line on State Road 20. Mrs. Walter McTurk has one of the framed mirrors in her home on St. Johns Avenue.

<sup>14</sup>Palatka Daily News, August 20, 1922.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 63.

<sup>17</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 19, 1953.

1922. It began at a council meeting in March when the motion was made to change the city charter. A storm of opposition ensued; council President Dineen and City Attorney Merryday immediately opposed it and the motion died for lack of a second. The reactionaries stated " . . . such a radical step is not really desired by our best citizens . . . . The agitation comes from a certain element of malcontents, who are never satisfied unless they are stirring things up and getting in the limelight."<sup>18</sup>

Alderman B. C. Pearce did agree that the number of councilmen should be reduced. There were eighteen aldermen, four of whom were added when Palatka Heights was annexed.

In July the report circulated that the city was in dire financial condition. A total of \$19,705.99 in unpaid taxes was noted, and " . . . the only thing keeping the city going is the sale of water."<sup>19</sup> The council employed a collector to bring in the delinquent taxes.

The council, on September 5, was pressured into appointing a committee to check into the " . . . establishment of a commission form of government."<sup>20</sup> Alderman Jarrett proposed that this committee include the president of the council, L. A. Smith; one Kiwanian; one Rotarian; one member of the Chamber of Commerce; one member of the Women's Club and three aldermen.<sup>21</sup> This eight member panel was perhaps an indication of the struggle

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<sup>18</sup>Times-Herald, March 10, 1922.

<sup>19</sup>Palatka Daily News, July 9, 1922.

<sup>20</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 28.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.



ahead, although it was a smaller group than the present council.

The Times-Herald reported on September 22 that the council "put a stop" to Jarrett's proposal. It stated that there was ". . . no demand on the part of the voters of the city for a change in the form of government . . . and no need for the expense of an election."<sup>22</sup> The article also noted that the last charter referendum was defeated by a ten to one majority and that ". . . only a real demand from the taxpayers would justify another election." It would cost a thousand dollars just to publish the charter according to the paper.<sup>23</sup>

The mayor entered the controversy in October by recommending that a committee of five be appointed by the council and that they devise a new instrument which then could be sent to the legislature, after the approval of the council, and this would obviate the need for an election. One of these would be appointed by the mayor who was not a member of the council. The president of the council would select two more from the council, and these three would choose the remaining two, neither of whom could be a councilman.<sup>24</sup>

The mayor also recommended a charter limitation on taxation of ten mills and that the commission be limited to five, seven or nine members elected at large.

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<sup>22</sup>The Times-Herald was the spokesman for the reactionary element in Palatka, always maintaining that the status quo remain unchanged.

<sup>23</sup>Times-Herald, September 22, 1922.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., October 6, 1922.

The mayor won. F. J. Fearnside was chosen chairman of the "Charter Committee" as it came to be known. R. F. Adams and Frank D. Wattles were the two "non-public" members and the two aldermen chosen were B. M. Jarrett and J. L. Waits.<sup>25</sup> The committee met for the first time on October 30.

By working throughout the winter the committee was able to present their efforts to the public in March. The Palatka Daily News for March 4, 1923, published the complete text of the new instrument.

The council passed a resolution on April 17 to petition the state legislature for permission to adopt the new commission form of government.<sup>26</sup> The legislature gave its legal authorization to do so on May 7, and a referendum election was called for June 5.

The press covered little of the discussion on the proposed charter. The Times-Herald made a favorable gesture on February 9, pointing out that Alderman H. H. Van Horne attended his second council meeting on February 6, although he'd been in office for over a year. The next real statement this paper made regarding the election occurred after the election. There was not one mention of it in the two editions prior to June 5. No mention of precincts, no mention of voting hours or stations, and no reference to the issue at all. The Times-Herald for June 8 carried a breakdown of the vote; three hundred and twenty-one citizens voted in favor of the new form of government and one hundred and

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<sup>25</sup>Palatka Daily News, October 30, 1922.

<sup>26</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 84.

seven opposed it. Perhaps the editor was somewhat defeatist in saying, "As we expected a big majority was given in favor of changing to the commission form of government . . . ." <sup>27</sup>

The Daily News represented the progressive element although most of the verve usually demonstrated was lacking in its presentation.

The vote itself was significant in that less than half the registered voters bothered to exercise the privilege. Obviously the citizenry was just apathetic. A good yardstick comparison demonstrating the indifference occurred in a road bond referendum held in the county in May. Palatkans favored it by a three hundred and ninety-two to twenty-seven margin. <sup>28</sup> The apathy was not limited to Palatka however, for the county vote totalled only seven hundred and thirty. <sup>29</sup>

Some attention was distracted from the referendum by other developments of a more colorful nature.

In May, 1922, I. C. Zelma perfected a gasoline substitute he claimed would provide mileage to the extent of twenty-six miles per gallon. The fuel was tested on all manner of Putnam roads, meaning either brick or sand, and proved successful. Zelma dubbed his fuel "Byzene" in November, 1923, and made plans to open a station in Palatka. <sup>30</sup>

Hastings pushed for a separate county status again in

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<sup>27</sup> Times-Herald, June 8, 1923.

<sup>28</sup> Palatka Daily News, May 9, 1923.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Times-Herald, November 9, 1923.

August, 1922. The defined area encompassed the potato belt area from Tocoi to Elkton and Crescent Beach, south to Haw Creek and north along Dunn's Creek to the St. Johns.<sup>31</sup>

A blow to the economy occurred in August when W. S. Comings of the Rodman Lumber Company died. The company was one of Putnam's largest taxpayers. By October the firm had been declared bankrupt and was assigned into receivership under a Mr. Williams of Jacksonville. Two months later it was announced that the Ocala Norther, or Ocklawaha Valley Railway, would cease operations on December 29. The court, Judge W. H. Bullock presiding, upheld the closing of the operation. What with the shut-down of Rodman Lumber and the removal of the Wilson Cypress operation further south, the road could no longer rely on any permanent customer and it was to be dismantled and sold for junk.<sup>32</sup>

Cows and pigs roaming the streets became a topic of discussion for the council in September, 1922. Not everyone was overly concerned about it however, for a motion by Alderman Pursley to pass an ordinance prohibiting swing or cattle within two hundred feet of a well or place of residence " . . . was tabled by a vote of eleven to one."<sup>33</sup>

Fannie M. Lepla wrote the editor on January 7 stating, "If there were fewer cattle and hogs running loose on the streets there would be more encouragement for those who try to beautify

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1922.

<sup>32</sup>Palatka Daily News, December 30, 1922.

<sup>33</sup>Times-Herald, September 22, 1922.

their yards."<sup>34</sup>

Palatka's first style show was held at the Howell Theatre in October. Local models under the direction of Mrs. Florence Stelts offered the latest fashions, with furniture from Yelverton's and light from Spencer's providing the setting. Music was played by the Palatka Orchestra.<sup>35</sup>

The bridge caused consternation in late 1922. Up until October, \$22,734.78 had been spent for maintenance of the structure. Gross income from tolls for the period were \$23,577.60.<sup>36</sup> The commission shouldn't have realized the profit. A new toll schedule was devised the following month which cut fares significantly. Passenger rates were lowered to a half-cent each trip. Tickets continued to be sold in books, a book of ten costing twenty-five cents for vehicles. A graduated scale was devised in blocks of fifty, one hundred, five hundred, one thousand and five thousand tickets each. The cost of these ranged from one dollar to twenty-five dollars and single ticket prices determined on this basis ranged from two cents to one-half cent each.<sup>37</sup>

This toll schedule became a political issue and a toy. In January the rate was changed to five cents for pedestrians; ten cents for a single team; twenty cents for a double team; fifteen cents for an empty truck and twenty-five cents for a loaded

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<sup>34</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 7, 1923.

<sup>35</sup>Times-Herald, October 6, 1922.

<sup>36</sup>Palatka Daily News, October 27, 1922.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., November 10, 1922.

truck.<sup>38</sup> Little wonder for the consternation.

A speed limit was posted on the bridge in January. The first offender, a Negro, was convicted of exceeding the twelve mile per hour limit and was fined seventy-five dollars and six cents, twenty-five dollars and six cents of which was for court costs.<sup>39</sup>

Putnam wanted more than reduced tolls however. There was some clamor for a toll-free bridge in February, although Guerry felt that this was impossible. He did advocate a toll-free period for the Legionnaires who were convening in Palatka in March.<sup>40</sup> The convention opened on May 14 with " . . . forty to forty-five delegates present from all over the state."<sup>41</sup>

The draw on the railroad bridge was torn loose from its moorings during a severe windstorm on March 7.<sup>42</sup>

On March 8, the toll schedule for use of the motor bridge was changed once again; now a yearly pass could be purchased for fifteen dollars; if more than one vehicle in a family would be using the service, a second annual ducat could be obtained for ten dollars.<sup>43</sup>

Two weeks later the tolls on the Dunn's Creek and Rice Creek bridges were reduced by fifty per cent to twenty-five

<sup>38</sup>Times-Herald, January 5, 1923.

<sup>39</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 30, 1923.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., February 14, 1923.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., May 14, 1923.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., March 7, 1923.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., March 8, 1923.

cents.<sup>44</sup>

Talk of a new bridge increased. F. J. Fearnside, C. C. Hudson and C. E. Rowton urged its construction, claiming it would pay for itself in twenty years and then would be free.<sup>45</sup> By October the county commission conceded to an undercurrent of popular demand and prepared for a bond issue referendum to construct a new bridge.<sup>46</sup>

Violence proved to be the next distraction. Racism underlay some of it. E. W. Smith, a crippled Negro, was sentenced to fifteen days for attempting to sell a car with four "perfectly good tires" for thirty-five dollars. He was booked on a charge of vagrancy pending an investigation into the ownership of the car. The editor rationalized, "If Smith's ownership of the car shall be made clear the police will wish him well and hurry him on his way."<sup>47</sup>

It was simply a case of living up to the word of the law however. Only two days previous, Judge J. C. Calhoun was "visibly affected" when he had to sentence his boyhood associate, Henry Hutchinson, Jr., to jail for six months for illegally selling alcoholic beverages.<sup>48</sup>

The spotlight centered on Welaka in February. City Marshal Dan O'Brien shot and killed Edward C. Harper for refusing

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., March 18, 1923.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., March 9, 1923.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., October 24, 1923.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., November 5, 1922.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., November 3, 1922.

to permit O'Brien to impound his hogs. Harper apparently went to O'Brien's home with a rifle, but it was not clear who fired first. Harper's son was wounded in the gun battle as well.<sup>49</sup> Small wonder. O'Brien was an ex-"Mounty," a "sure-shot," and "absolutely fearless" according to Querry in a demonstration of sensationalism in the cause of law and order.<sup>50</sup>

In the midst of the violence the schools ran out of funds. The teachers were directed to work quickly for the term would have to be shortened. The Women's Club hastily organized a house to house canvass for funds to keep the schools in session.<sup>51</sup> By April, four thousand three hundred seventy-nine dollars and fifty-eight cents had been collected, a most creditable effort.<sup>52</sup>

William Jennings Bryan appeared once again in February; he addressed the Chamber of Commerce supporting the building of a Young Men's Christian Association at Gainesville. He later spoke to a " . . . large audience in the school auditorium."<sup>53</sup>

A " . . . wonderful presentation of conditions in the South during the days of reconstruction" was featured at the Howell Theatre in February. Querry waxed eloquent:

Much light has been thrown in recent years on the controversy concerning the exact status of the Ku Kluxes. As the secrets of their deeds and especially their motives

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., February 8, 1923.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., February 9, 1923.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., January 9, 1923.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., April 8, 1923.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., February 12, 1923.



comes to light, the final verdict of history leans more and more strongly in their favor.<sup>54</sup>

The film "Birth of a Nation" had come to Palatka. It would be back.

The Daily News headline blared "STORMING MOB REPULSED AT COUNTY JAIL" on March 2.

More than half a hundred shots were fired at 1:15 this morning when a dozen unmasked men stormed the Putnam County jail, shot the sheriff P. M. Hagan, perforated [sic] the door with bullets, demolished window glass, and were success-  
fully repulsed in their efforts to obtain entrance.<sup>55</sup>

The mob was looking for Arthur Johnson, a Negro who'd shot F. L. Cross on February 24. Cross was an employee of the State Road Department and his avengers were all fellow employees. They'd heard Johnson was in the Putnam County jail and they were going to lynch him. Johnson had been in Putnam's jail for a short period, but had then been transferred to Duval County.

The sheriff was awakened by a knock on the door. He probably suspected something, for he answered it with gun in hand. Immediately a " . . . half-dozen guns were thrust into his face." He brought his gun down on the nearest head, slammed the door and quickly moved to the left of it just in time to avoid " . . . a shower of bullets,"<sup>56</sup> one of which struck Hagan in the hand. A fusillade lasting for two minutes then poured into the jail from across the street where there were two cars parked with the engines running. "Not one word was spoken during the entire

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., February 23, 1923.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., March 2, 1923.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

assault,"<sup>57</sup> but the intention was obvious when a fifty-foot length of rope was found where the cars had been parked, after they drove away. Hagan's only comment was, "I'm telling the world now that from this time on I'm going after everything that looks suspicious. I'm going to take no more chances."<sup>58</sup>

The News reported that eighteen members of the road department had been taken into custody in Gainesville later that morning. Eleven of the gang were residents of other than Alachua County.<sup>59</sup> They were returned to the jail in Palatka on an attempted lynching charge.

The gang was fired en toto by the state, however, they could regain their jobs if found innocent of the charges against them. Perhaps an indication of Putnam's political power was demonstrated when talk of a change of venue was heard on March 6.<sup>60</sup>

Three days later Sheriff Hagan identified three of the men who'd shot at him and Deputy Brown identified one other as being a part of the mob.<sup>61</sup> It was stated on the same day that one of the cars the men used was a Dodge owned by the State Road Department.

Judge A. V. Long of the Eighth Judicial District added speculation to the change of venue idea on March 23, deploring

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., March 4, 1923.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., March 6, 1923.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., March 9, 1923.

the conditions in Putnam's jail. He stated, ". . . unless conditions at the county jail are improved I will in the name of humanity, order the transference of prisoners to other county jails where they will have proper quarters."<sup>62</sup> He did. ~~Six~~ days later the change of venue to Bradford County was ordered.

The change of venue proved to be to the gang's advantage. A nine man jury deliberated for thirty-five minutes and declared them innocent of the charges against them. Only three of the defendants took the stand during the trial.<sup>63</sup>

Security at the jail was challenged on May 31 when two prisoners escaped. Hagan said the feat was accomplished by someone having slipped them a hacksaw which they used to cut the grate in the door. They were accosted by a trusty before they could leave the premises however.<sup>64</sup>

Construction in Palatka was another distraction. It was estimated that \$200,000.00 in construction marked the fifteen month period prior to November, 1922, most of which involved the erection of new homes.<sup>65</sup> The year closed with the possibility of the Methodists building a new one million dollar hospital in Palatka according to Reverend Sibert. He added that it would ". . . depend on the attitudes of the people," whatever that meant. The Kiwanis Club vowed to ". . . stop at nothing to

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., March 23, 1923.

<sup>63</sup>Times-Herald, April 27, 1923.

<sup>64</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 31, 1923.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., November 22, 1922.

gain the hospital for Palatka."<sup>66</sup>

The bandstand on the square was erected in February, 1923, at a cost of twelve hundred dollars, and the first new building on the Putnam House property also was under construction in that month. F. V. Oliver was erecting a two story cement structure to house his automobile supply business.<sup>67</sup> Another part of the lot was used to accommodate a circus and bazaar during the same month.

Fire destroyed the old Palatka Athletic Association Clubhouse, also known as the Wilson Boat House, on the river at the foot of Dodge Street in March. The flames were discovered about noon by Sheriff Hagan. The bank instruments were all destroyed as was the launch "Margaret." If it hadn't been for the narrow walkway out to the structure, the firemen might have had a better chance at saving it.<sup>68</sup>

Palatka's foremost construction company was the Palatka Development Company which by October had erected sixty-eight new buildings in the town. It was currently clearing the land at President and Thirteenth Streets for use as a park.<sup>69</sup>

Marine construction was somewhat revived in August when construction of the "City of Palatka," a sixty-four foot vessel, began at the Gibson Boat Works on River Street. It would provide passenger and freight service between Palatka and

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., December 19, 1922.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., February 6, 1923.

<sup>68</sup>Times-Herald, March 30, 1923.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., October 12, 1923.

Jacksonville. It was launched in October.<sup>70</sup>

Expansion of public construction programs was given a great boost in May when a \$700,000.00 bond issue was passed in the county. Part of the funds would be used to build a new jail, a three story structure on Seventh Street near Reid. Commissioner Burt opposed the project, claiming, "A few thousand dollars would repair the old jail."<sup>71</sup>

The town lamented not having purchased the old Merryday property in August, 1922, when it was announced that were waterfront property available, the Leesburg Pulp and Paper Company would have located a finishing plant in Palatka.<sup>72</sup>

The first clock to grace Lemon Street was erected by the Putnam National Bank in August. It took a week to install the device, two feet in diameter, which chimed every fifteen minutes. The clock, illuminated at night, was built by O.B. McClintock of Minneapolis and it featured the ". . . softest and most beautiful chimes ever heard in any city of the old or new world."<sup>73</sup>

All the construction meant more jobs and when the Wilson Mill closed in July for three months for repairs and improvements, the economic situation was stable enough to allow the Daily News to comment that the shut-down would not" . . .

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., August 17, 1923.

<sup>71</sup>Palatka Daily News, August 7, 1923.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., August 25, 1923.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., August 18, 1923.

constitute a depression in local labor circles."<sup>74</sup>

There had been a shortage of labor, at least in one instance, for it was announced by Postmaster Gay that the post office would now be open from eight o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening beginning in August. It had been closing at noon for lack for employees.<sup>75</sup>

Another Kaolin plant opened west of Palatka in August. The United Clay Mine Corporation of Trenton, New Jersey, purchased several hundred acres of land near Johnson. The demand for clay products was not met by the Edgar plant and the new plant hoped to meet that demand.<sup>76</sup>

This new affluent situation brought attention to several problems of a civic nature. Guerry hit the cemetery in July, saying it had fallen into great neglect; the mounds over the graves had sunk to the level of the surface of the surrounding ground and weeds were ". . . nauseating the place."<sup>77</sup>

Serena Bailey was dismissed as city librarian in September; R. F. Adams, chairman of the library committee, felt she was not carrying out her duties as directed. Adams resigned when Alderman Johnson suggested the difficulty be settled and his resignation was refused by Council President L. A. Smith who held him out of order.<sup>78</sup> Miss Bailey retained her position

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., July 31, 1923.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., August 6, 1923

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., July 10, 1923

<sup>78</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 110

also.

Beginning in August, a new drive to instill civic pride in Palatka and to seek out new enterprise for the town was undertaken. On August 18, a "Friendship Motorcade" of forty to fifty of the leading citizens started a six hundred mile tour of the state, especially to the central and southern area. The Rotary suggested the project which would ". . . form closer relations with other towns the size of Palatka." The reason for this undertaking was ". . . to see just what the moving spirit is among the citizens [there]."<sup>79</sup> For the first time Palatka publicly acknowledged that it needed assistance to meet the needs of the town and actually sought for new ideas in other areas. A long period of almost complete reliance on its own resources had come to an end, regardless of how temporary the attitude was. The route to be followed by the motorcade included Ocala, Leesburg, Eustis, Lakeland, Bartow, Kissimmee, Orlando, Sanford, Deland and then Palatka.<sup>80</sup>

The movement intensified in September. The moving spirit to develop a greater town was expressed daily in a promotional campaign to instill the feeling of civic pride in the citizenry. Each day the top of the front page of the Daily News blared, "I'll do it for Palatka."<sup>81</sup> Most advertisements of the several business establishments echoed the statement. The "Greater Palatka Campaign" was launched at a mass meeting at the high

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<sup>79</sup>Palatka Daily News, August 18, 1923.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., September 27, 1923.

school on September 20. Early traces of the old confidence were noted but about a week later the advertisements began to preach, "Keep your money in Palatka."<sup>82</sup> The patriotic notion prevailed and the initial goal backfired. A new goal, the creation of a super Palatka, emerged.

Beginning October 6, the new confidence was expressed in the press which now stated, "I've done it for Palatka." This caption graced the front page of every issue through October 15.<sup>83</sup>

A campaign to instill new blood into the Chamber of Commerce commenced on October 2. The motto was "Work to build for tomorrow."<sup>84</sup> The ultimate goal was to instill in the public the belief in ". . . the general acceptance of Palatka's final decision to be denied nothing."<sup>85</sup>

The new county jail opened; it cost \$54,712.00 and was ". . . modern in every way." It had fourteen cells, each with bunks, and two spaces for the insane. It was not officially accepted by the county commissioners until June, 1924, however.<sup>86</sup>

Putnam's statistics for 1922 were released; Table Twenty-two describes the economic situation in part.

The actual drive to increase membership in the Chamber of Commerce began on October 2. It coincided with the launching of the "City of Palatka" which replaced the "Pilot Boy," the

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., October 15, 1923.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., October 2, 1923.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., June 3, 1924.



latter having become " . . . too expensive to operate."<sup>87</sup> It also coincided with the announcement that the St. Joseph's convent would close after having been in " . . . continuous operation since 1884." The reason given was a " . . . lack of patronage of the schools," which was not difficult to determine by the amount of money given the schools in 1922. The closing of the school was especially significant when one considered that it was the first such institution to be closed in the country. The five sisters were transferred to Jacksonville and St. Augustine.<sup>88</sup>

TABLE 22

SELECTED VALUES: PUTNAM COUNTY, 1922<sup>a</sup>

Item	Number	Value
Automobiles	1,428	\$ 276,000.00
"Graded" cattle	269	4,602.00
"Range" cattle	8,728	45,432.00
Hogs	2,609	6,082.00
Horses	746	39,629.00
Personal property		1,453,110.00
Real Estate		3,855,340.00
Special school taxes		28,685.10

<sup>a</sup>Palatka Daily News, October 2, 1923.

The first day's drive netted one hundred and fifty-five new members; the goal was three hundred. By October 4 the campaign ended, successfully achieving and surpassing the goal. Three hundred and twenty-eight new members had subscribed to the effort, all of whom had been approached by several teams

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., October 3, 1923.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

led by Captain Morris Cochrane, Major Ferrell, Captain B. H. Hendrick, Captain T. E. Mobley, Major Shelley and Jim Spencer.<sup>89</sup>

Two days later, ninety-five more members were added and the caption, "I've done it for Palatka" graced the front page of the Daily News.<sup>90</sup>

The membership rolls had not yet closed when it was announced that the election of officers of the reorganized Chamber of Commerce was scheduled. So as to encourage all members to vote, the polls remained open for three days.<sup>91</sup>

All this "Palatka-ism" ruffled the feathers of some in the Crescent City area. The Crescent City Call advised that a movement to create "Fruitland County" was launched in early October. Surprisingly, the Daily News favored the proposed new entity which was bounded on the north by the river, on the east by Lake George, on the west by Crescent Lake and extending down into Volusia County to include Seville.<sup>92</sup>

After two days of voting less than one hundred members of the Chamber of Commerce had cast their votes. Any initiative by that body would have to be assumed by this one hundred member faction of the body.<sup>93</sup> The balloting time was extended because of the "unsatisfactory returns" on October 18.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., October 4, 1923.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., October 6, 1923.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., October 8, 1923.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., October 11, 1923.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., October 18, 1923.

The results of the election were published later in the month. J. H. Yelverton had been elected president; H. O. Hamm was vice-president; and H. A. Davis had been elected treasurer of the organization. The first regular meeting was called for October 23 at seven-thirty at the Women's Club.<sup>95</sup> It assumed a political role immediately. In November Howell A. Davis was nominated for mayor.<sup>96</sup>

The entire city council was held in contempt of court by Judge Koonce of Tavares on October 16. The body failed to post an additional bond, as directed, to protect the Southern Utilities Company which requested an increase in its rates from ten to fifteen cents per kilowatt hour of electricity. On September 20 the court ordered the additional bond to be posted within fifteen days while it investigated the company's request for the increase.<sup>97</sup>

The failure to come up with the additional eight thousand dollars spread rumors throughout the state that the council had refused to pay a debt in that amount. "Such a charge was ridiculous," claimed the Daily News.<sup>98</sup> Palatka's attorney petitioned the State Supreme Court for a writ of prohibition, but this was denied. When the judge heard of the delay, he issued the writ of contempt.

Palatka's budget for 1924 was released on October 17. The

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., October 22, 1923.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., November 10, 1923.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., October 16, 1923.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., October 18, 1923.

appropriations totalled \$129,300.00, some \$35,000.00 less than the previous year's budget.<sup>99</sup> The new budget included the latter amount for the water works; the previous budget had not.<sup>100</sup> The larger appropriation included \$17,500.00 for the sinking fund and payment of interest; \$15,000.00 each for the water mains and sewers; and one hundred and fifty dollars each for the care of city prisoners and charity. No funds were allocated the library which still had two thousand one hundred seven dollars and twenty-four cents in its fund; this was considered sufficient for the next year's operation.<sup>101</sup>

More confusion was added by the county commission's calling a referendum relative to the half million dollar bond issue for the new bridge. The election also dealt with the creation of a county-wide road and bridge district.<sup>102</sup>

The tension increased in November. Fifty-four delegates were named from the nine city wards to choose the Democratic candidates for city offices. Guerry stated the election is ". . . entirely one of personality; no policy has been expressed."<sup>103</sup> Everyone, understandably, wanted a piece of the pie. Charges of "machine politics" ran "rampant" throughout the city.

Perhaps the charges were true. It took only one meeting for the fifty-four man delegation to nominate, on the Democratic

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<sup>99</sup>Ibid., October 17, 1923.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., October 18, 1923.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., October 17, 1923.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid., October 24, 1923.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., November 7, 1923.

ticket, the following: Howell A. Davis, Mayor; and R. F. Adams, R. J. Hancock,<sup>104</sup> L. D. Phillips and J. H. Yelverton as commissioners.<sup>105</sup>

The attention given politics deviated on Armistice Day. Businesses closed, school was open only " . . . long enough to call the roll," and Lemon was " . . . a street of colorful attractiveness with flags and bunting upon all business houses."<sup>106</sup> The American Legion organized the celebration which featured a speech by Senator Duncan U. Fletcher and Major General J. H. Harp, Commander of the Confederate Veterans of Florida and father of Mrs. R. F. Adams.<sup>107</sup>

Doctor A. M. Steen announced his candidacy for mayor as an independent on November 15. He had run for office in the past on the Republican ticket.

The bridge issue was stimulated on November 18. The decision to make repairs to the structure on Sunday which assumedly was Putnam's only day to undertake an excursion, only served to intensify feelings regarding the bond issue. Even

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<sup>104</sup> Hancock, the county clerk, was given a new car by the council in July when his was demolished by running into a rope erected across the street by the city near Reid and Seventh Streets. The city agreed to pay his medical expenses as well. The city would gain possession of the damaged vehicle and sell it, but only after the city attorney regained possession of the battery, the one good bumper, the motormeter and the spare tire which Hancock pulled out of the car after the accident. Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," pp. 102 and 104.

<sup>105</sup> Palatka Daily News, November 10, 1923.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., November 12, 1923.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

after the repairs had been made, the bridge operator claimed the draw didn't function any better.<sup>108</sup>

The "City of Palatka" departed on its maiden run to Jacksonville on November 29. Instilled with the new "Palatka spirit," Guerry exhorted that it had been " . . . built completely, all machinery installed and ready for service in the boat yard of the Mathews and Allen Machinery Company . . . ."<sup>109</sup> The new operation would mean cheaper goods in Palatka; one example would be a reduction of three cents per gallon for gasoline. The vessel, drawing six feet when loaded, was capable of a speed of eleven miles per hour.

A rash of "minor troubles" delayed the arrival at Jacksonville until December 19. Guerry had no further comment.<sup>110</sup>

The bridge bond issue passed on November 30 by a vote of seven hundred and seventy-six to two hundred and thirty-four. The road district issue, on the same ballot, also passed with six hundred and seventy-four votes in favor, while three hundred and thirty-nine opposed the consolidation.<sup>111</sup>

Finally Palatka's big decision could be dealt with. Guerry declared that a " . . . heavy colored vote was expected to upset the Democrats . . . ." on December 1. Total registration in the city was one thousand one hundred and thirteen said

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., November 19, 1923.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., November 30, 1923.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., December 19, 1923.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., December 1, 1923.

Henis Petemam, the Supervisor of Registration.<sup>112</sup> More Negroes were registered than at any time in the past and a long time had elapsed since Palatka had had a Republican government. "Many were predicting that this will occur this year."<sup>113</sup>

Guerry chastised the Democrats saying there had been " . . . no organized effort on the part of the Democratic party . . . ." and "Mr. Davis . . . has done no campaigning . . . [because] . . . he had not been a seeker of the office . . . ."<sup>114</sup> Guerry also stated that much of the disinterest was attributed to the bridge and road issues in the county. The city election had been " . . . dwarfed . . . by the intense campaign for a change in the county system of road administration and for the bond issue for the new bridge."<sup>115</sup>

Nevertheless, more than seventy per cent of Palatka's voters participated in the referendum. Davis defeated Steen by a four hundred twenty-eight to two hundred seventy-two majority. The four commissioners, chosen for from one to four years based on the number of votes they received were, beginning with the four year term, F. R. Adams with six hundred and four votes; L. D. Phillips with five hundred and eighty-seven; J. H. Yelverton with five hundred and sixty-nine; and R. J. Hancock with five hundred and sixty-seven. The new form of government would be initiated on the first Monday in January. Henceforth,

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<sup>112</sup>Ibid., November 29, 1923.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., December 1, 1923.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

the mayor and one commissioner would be elected annually. Said Editor Guerry, "Yesterday's election puts the stamp of disapproval forever on practices which have divided the city on more than one occasion and retarded its growth."<sup>116</sup>

As the year closed the trustees for the bridge and road funds were named: C. E. Curry, Doctor A. B. Harbison and C. E. Rowton each posted a bond of \$10,000.00.<sup>117</sup>

The outgoing council received good news just before Christmas. The city won its suit against the Southern Utilities Company to prevent it from raising its electric rates.<sup>118</sup>

H. G. Schlecht was busy manufacturing spark plugs at 820 Lemon Street. He'd already sold thirty-three hundred units, each of which had "Palatka, Florida" burned into the procelain.<sup>119</sup>

The new commissioner was inaugurated on January 7, 1924. Its first business defined some of the rules to be followed and it determined to meet the first and third Tuesday of each month. Each commissioner was bonded for five thousand dollars and all old public service offices were to be retained until the new city manager was appointed.<sup>120</sup>

Palatka had assets totalling \$664,673.41 on January 7. Its indebtedness amounted to \$228,042.24. A total of \$31,901.27 was owed the city in back taxes for a ten year period of time.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>116</sup>Ibid., December 5, 1923.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., December 21, 1923.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., December 22, 1923.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., December 27, 1923.

<sup>120</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 153.

<sup>121</sup>Times-Herald, January 11, 1924.



An operating fund totalling \$24,233.29 was turned over to the new commission.<sup>122</sup>

City Engineer Randolph resigned effective immediately; he took a similar position at New Smyrna.<sup>123</sup> Mayor Howell A. Davis in his inaugeral address stated, "No government is greater than its people. We are entering at the beginning of a new era in Palatka's history. We have come to the point in our municipal affairs where the new and progressive methods must supercede the old and reactionary order of things."<sup>124</sup>

Verbally, the new era would begin more optomistically.

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<sup>122</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 8, 1924.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER XX. ONE MORE BRIDGE

Twenty-five persons applied for the position of city manager; one was from Palatka and only five were from Florida. On February 9, Oscar Dobbs of Kowata, Oklahoma, was elected by a five to nothing vote of the commission. Dobbs accepted the appointment at a monthly salary of three hundred and seventy-five dollars. He was thirty-three years old and had six years experience in the field.<sup>1</sup> Dobbs arrived in Palatka in March and assumed his duties on March 24, 1924.<sup>2</sup>

The commission published the salary schedule in March. Their own salaries were ten dollars per meeting. The clerk/assessor received two hundred dollars monthly. The treasurer/collector was paid one hundred and fifty dollars per month. The police chief was paid one hundred and twenty-five dollars and the fire chief seventy-five dollars per month. The attorney received seventy-five and the municipal judge fifty dollars monthly.<sup>3</sup> Chowning Cauthorn was hired as the first city clerk.

The clamor for civic improvement began right away. E. L. Mann, President of the Library Board, requested that a new library building be erected.<sup>4</sup> On January 16 the Chamber of

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<sup>1</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 162.

<sup>2</sup>Palatka Daily News, March 22, 1924.

<sup>3</sup>Times-Herald, March 7, 1924.

<sup>4</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 167.

Commerce and the Women's Club recommended a \$350,000.00 bond issue for parks, playgrounds, an eighteen hole golf course, athletic fields, municipal docks, a fire station, a jail, a hospital, improvements to the streets, sewers, water works and the white way for Lemon Street.<sup>5 & 6</sup>

The commission responded by calling a public meeting to discuss the bond issue. All twenty of those who attended favored it.<sup>7</sup>

The motion picture industry stirred Palatka in January. It was announced by the Lacky Corporation that the movie "Sinking Sands" would be filmed in the area around San Mateo and the river.<sup>8</sup> Actor Thomas Meighan and actress Virginia Valli were the featured stars in a troupe that numbered thirty-five in all. Some were housed at the Martin Hotel and in private residences in town for lack of other accommodations. Others stayed at a church in San Mateo and in St. Augustine.<sup>9</sup>

The central theme of the movie, adapted from the book Quicksands, dealt with the reformation of an ex-convict from New York in ". . . the peaceful environments of a small town to which he goes to start life anew . . . ." <sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 16, 1924.

<sup>6</sup>The Putnam County Country Club was purchased by Howell A. Davis as a sheriff's sale earlier in the month for five hundred dollars. Davis stated he'd sell it to the city for that amount for use as a park. The club originally cost seven thousand dollars and another \$12,000.00 had been spent for improvements. Palatka Daily News, January 7, 1924.

<sup>7</sup>Palatka Daily News, February 16, 1924.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., January 3, 1924.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., January 11, 1924.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

Perhaps the Arnold Brothers, who operated the Howell Theatre, felt their business would be stimulated, and they announced that remodeling of the theatre would begin on January 13.<sup>11</sup>

The movie was released on April 20; the title was changed to "The Confidence Man" because the original sounded too much like a current movie, "Shifting Sands."<sup>12</sup>

Palatka's commission next became embroiled in the bridge controversy which, because no agreement could be reached as regarded its location, delayed the project for a year. In a special meeting on April 26 the commission voted four to one that the foot of the bridge would feed into Lemon Street. A letter of protest did not affect their resolution.<sup>13</sup>

The controversy intensified in April when it was determined that the War Department would have to approve the location. The Times-Herald felt that the Lemon site was too close to the Florida East Coast Railway Bridge.<sup>14</sup> The bond trustees recommended it however.<sup>15</sup>

The Corps of Engineers received written protests regarding the Lemon Street location. A public hearing was suggested so as to clear the air on the issue. The meeting was held in June. R. F. Adams of the city commission, H. M. Brown of the Florida

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., January 12, 1924.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., April 7, 1924.

<sup>13</sup> Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 182.

<sup>14</sup> Times-Herald, April 25, 1924.

<sup>15</sup> Palatka Daily News, April 22, 1924.

East Coast Railway, Charles Burt from the county commission, Henry Hutchinson representing some waterfront interests, Robert L. Hutchinson representing the Thompson interests, H. M. de Montmollin and Clyde Line Captains Thomas Floyd and Thomas W. Lund all opposed the Lemon location.<sup>16</sup>

Their efforts were realized in August when the War Department did reject the Lemon Street site.<sup>17</sup> The following month provided no relief by the decision makers so Guerry took the initiative and threw it open to the public, printing a coupon which provided space for answering the question, "Where do you want the bridge?" The respondent was to sign his suggestion and return it to the Daily News.<sup>18</sup> On September 23 Guerry berated the public apathy. Less than a hundred had complied with his request.<sup>19</sup>

The next day, the Chamber of Commerce recommended the bridge be located at the foot of Reid Street.<sup>20</sup> The War Department called for another public hearing on September 30. Before this occurred, however, yet another site was proposed. This one recommended a structure crossing from Devil's Elbow where the river was only twelve hundred feet wide, a quarter of the distance of the already proposed site. A bridge could be built at this point for \$200,000.00, and even if it cost another

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<sup>16</sup>Times-Herald, June 6, 1924.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., August 22, 1924.

<sup>18</sup>Palatka Daily News, September 20, 1924.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., September 23, 1924.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., September 24, 1924.

\$100,000.00 to construct roads to either end, the county would save money.<sup>21</sup>

Sarah B. Thompson wrote from Boston, ". . . don't let the bridge get close to the railway bridge. There would be too much river congestion."<sup>22</sup> By now the county commission began to be more concerned about the hassle. It declared no interest would be paid on the bonds until the site was determined.<sup>23</sup> The War Department turned down the Reid Street location in November. It recommended a highway bridge north of the railway bridge, somewhere around Madison Street.<sup>24</sup> The site was once again up for grabs.

Activity of the Ku Klux Klan became more overt beginning in 1924. The largest Klan assembly to date occurred the day before Washington's birthday. It began at eight o'clock in the evening at the fair grounds, then moved in a mammoth parade down Emmett to Lemon and then to the square. Two horsemen draped in white led the parade followed by a car carrying a burning cross. An entourage, single file and several blocks in length, followed it.<sup>25</sup>

The Times-Herald mentioned Reverend Alen C. Shuler of Jacksonville as being the featured speaker but the Daily-Times singled out Lester A. Brown of Atlanta as championing the cause

<sup>21</sup>Times-Herald, September 26, 1924.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Palatka Daily News, September 5, 1924.

<sup>24</sup>Times-Herald, November 14, 1924.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., February 22, 1924.

of the Ku Klux Klan in flowery oratory, " . . . so interesting was it that none left the place."<sup>26</sup> Reverend Shuler, according to this account, " . . . accompanied Brown on the rostrum." Brown was " . . . received in many cases with applause." stated the News, and that the:

. . . organization would never be satisfied until the flag waved from every school house in America . . . . The Klan stands for restricting immigration . . . and the immigrants here must adopt our language or leave. Brown reiterated the ' . . . efforts to protect the purity of every woman, and defend the tenets of the order which prevented affiliation with Jews, Catholics, and negroes!'<sup>27</sup>

Guerry had a somewhat less favorable, and certainly more accurate account of the parade which " . . . failed to be as large as expected." It was reported that over eight hundred " . . . hooded members of the order would be in the parade . . ." but only a hundred and eighty showed up in " . . . single file over a considerable portion of the city." Some fifteen hundred Palatkans witnessed the parade.<sup>28</sup>

The Klan entered the political scene in June. Local Klan Number Thirteen sent a communication to the county commission referring to the fee bill, recently declared unconstitutional by the Attorney General. It appeared that the county judge, justice of the peace and sheriff were receiving exorbitant sums from fees and the Klan wanted the fees collected illegally by the individuals to be collected within the limit of the law.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Palatka Daily News, February 22, 1924.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., June 28, 1924.

The commission was "surprised by the letter" and would not discuss it until their July meeting. They were looking for argument that would stand up; Judge Calhoun expressed it on July 9, stating that the procedure followed had been used for thirty years and held it to be legal yet. Once again the matter was deferred to the subsequent meeting.<sup>30</sup>

The Klan was given support by the newly formed Ku Klux Klan Auxiliary, sixty members strong. They stated in the Daily News, "Come in; the water is fine, but don't think that we are not particular who are our associates in this sorority." The ladies vowed to, in ". . . less than one week from today, be doing the same kind of business that is being done by the male Kluxers."<sup>31</sup>

All this activity resulted in some suppression of the press. On July 21, Fred Jackson, a Negro, was arrested on a charge of intent to murder. He reputedly threw a ". . . piece of iron at Lawrence Wolfenden, but missed and struck Gladys Caglem on the shoulder." Guerry went on, "The incident, so heinous in portent, has been kept quiet, as it was feared that the public feeling might result in some rash act."<sup>32</sup> The incident occurred on Lemon Heights near the Merryday home, and Jackson was tracked easily because one of his shoes had no heel. He ". . . admitted the crime" which was not made public for

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., July 9, 1924.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., July 17, 1924.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., July 24, 1924.



three days.<sup>33</sup>

The Klan charges against the county commission were still being investigated by County Attorney A. H. Odom in September. He was to present his opinion to the commission on September 2 at two o'clock, but this was not made public.<sup>34</sup> In fact, no more mention was made of the incident until Odom resigned as attorney on October 7. He was succeeded by C. S. Green.<sup>35</sup>

Violence, not attributed to the Klan, occurred in early September when bridge tender H. C. Hall was taken from his post at midnight on the ninth. Two automobiles with an unspecified number of unmasked men approached from the east, took him to Francis and after ordering him to strip, whipped him and directed him to leave town within eight hours. He did. The other tender, a man named Griffin, did not recognize any of the men who he claimed were unarmed.<sup>36</sup>

An aura of mystery pervaded the Heights area. An old pink house, " . . . sitting up high on brick piers," was supposedly haunted. The house had long been vacant and any occupants of the place remained for only a short time. Travelers on Lemon out beyond the Heights reported seeing lights at late hours and sounds of doors slamming inside the structure.<sup>37</sup>

May's Landing was the site of the last Klan meeting for

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., September 2, 1924.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., October 7, 1924.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., September 10, 1924.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., August 4, 1924.

1924. This, according to the Times-Herald, was " . . . one of the largest and most enthusiastic in the country." Over a thousand persons from Duval, Flagler, Putnam and St. Johns counties witnessed a large initiation.<sup>38</sup>

The East Florida Savings and Trust Company moved to its new building on the corner of Lemon and Third Streets in March, 1924. The company dated to 1888, when it was organized as the East Florida Trust Company by B. S. Corsby of San Mateo. William J. Winegar was its first president; E. S. Crill assumed the position of president on June 8, 1899, when its name was changed to the current use. R. F. Adams served as president after January 17, 1916.<sup>39</sup>

A clean-up campaign commenced in April. A combined effort by the city commission, city manager, county nurse Miss Hargraves and the Red Cross undertook to rid Palatka of mosquitoes and rats.<sup>40</sup>

The city commission met on May 23 and took Palatka's most forward step to date when it passed a resolution proposing a \$36,000.00 bond issue to be decided in a referendum election on July 1.

The first official listing of the polling stations for Palatka's nine wards accompanied the notice of the first election to be held under the commission form of government.

The Times-Herald reported little interest on the part of

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<sup>38</sup>Times-Herald, December 19, 1924.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., March 14, 1924.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., April 18, 1924.

the citizenry relative to the bond issue a week after the announcement.<sup>41</sup> The following week the same paper declared that the Chamber of Commerce endorsed the issue.

TABLE 23  
PROPOSED BOND ISSUE, 1923<sup>a</sup>

Item	Amount
Public Parks . . . . .	\$60,000.00
Docks and warehouses . . . . .	60,000.00
Streets . . . . .	60,000.00
Sewers . . . . .	40,000.00
Water workd. . . . .	40,000.00
Library . . . . .	25,000.00
Fire equipment . . . . .	25,000.00
Streetlights . . . . .	15,000.00
Police Station . . . . .	10,000.00

<sup>a</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 193.

TABLE 24  
VOTING STATIONS AND PRECINCTS, 1923<sup>a</sup>

Wards	Location
Ward 1 . . . . .	West End Grocery Store
Ward 2 . . . . .	John Glass Hardward
Ward 3 . . . . .	H. M. de Montmollin's Store
Ward 4 . . . . .	City Hall
Ward 5 . . . . .	County Courthouse
Ward 6 . . . . .	Beasley's Garage
Ward 7 . . . . .	Fowler and Flake Garage
Ward 8 . . . . .	Coburn's Store
Ward 9 . . . . .	Register's Store

<sup>a</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 193.

Part of the park situation was alleviated in early June

<sup>41</sup>Times-Herald, May 16, 1924.

when a non-profit organization headed by H. F. Wilson leased the old water works from the city for a five year period at one dollar per year.<sup>42</sup> George Hilty, the "prime mover" and Chairman of the Palatka Recreation Committee, said the fifty-foot square reservoirs were seven feet deep and could be used as a pool. Bathhouses would be constructed and the ". . . unsightly buildings on the grounds would be torn down."<sup>43</sup>

Swimming was barred on June 11, however, primarily because there was ". . . no easy means of exit" from the pools. Nevertheless, the place was very popular in the heat of Palatka's early summer.<sup>44</sup>

The final reading of the bond issue passed the commission on May 23. It had only one change, the funds for the fire equipment would not include a new fire station.<sup>45</sup>

On June 25 another public meeting was held to discuss the bond issue. One was held at the courthouse and also at Brown's Store on the Heights. Less than four hundred voters were qualified and these people were the object of an intense campaign to away them in favor of the proposition.<sup>46</sup>

The Negro community approached the commission on June 17 expressing the desire that some improvements be made to their portion of town. The mayor assured them their ". . . wishes

<sup>42</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 194.

<sup>43</sup>Palatka Daily News, April 25, 1924.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., June 11, 1924.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., May 24, 1924.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., June 25, 1924.

would be given every consideration."<sup>47</sup>

The commission pointedly referred to the need for new jail facilities at the same meeting. Because the " . . . City Jail is in a deplorable condition . . ." the county sheriff was approached to determine whether he could accommodate the city's prisoners.<sup>48</sup> He could, for a price. The county asked for a fifty cent " commitment fee" and a "daily maintenance fee" amounting to sixty-five cents per person.<sup>49</sup>

The election was held on July 1 and the commission met the following day to count the votes. Each proposal on the bond issue had to be voted on individually. All the proposals passed except one, the library. Palatka continued to ignore the advantages of profiting by education.

Of the four hundred registered voters, three hundred and fifty-one voted; not every elector voted on each issue, however, as is indicated in Table 25.

The commission offered for sale \$335,000.00 in bonds on July 15. Issued in lots of one thousand dollars each, they would be repaid at five and one-half per cent per annum from two to thirty years after August 1, 1924, and payable on February and August first in gold coin at the Equitable Trust Company in New York.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 197.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., p. 283 ff.

TABLE 25

BOND ISSUE RETURNS<sup>a</sup>

Proposal	For	Against	Total Vote
Parks	191	153	344
Docks	195	154	349
Fire Department	222	129	351
Jail	211	133	344
Library	148	186	334
Streets, Sidewalks	219	128	347
Sewer	229	117	346
Water works	218	123	341
Streetlights	204	142	346
Liquidating floating debt	205	130	335

<sup>a</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 203 ff.

On August 26 the Putnam National Bank purchased the \$335,000.00 in bonds. It would earn, over the years, \$13,506.00 in interest.<sup>51</sup>

The commission started the city's greatest program of expenditure on September 16 when it paid \$12,500.00 for a new American La France pumper (less ten per cent for cash). The engine had a seven hundred and fifty gallon water capacity.<sup>52</sup>

Four days later a bid for nine thousand three hundred and seventy-five dollars was awarded the Gamewell Fire Alarm Company for a fire alarm system in the city. A bid by the Harrington-Seeburg Company was rejected on the grounds that the company had been in business for only three years. It had no systems operative in Florida and it had not been recognized by the

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 295.

Underwriter's Association. Its bid was forty-nine hundred dollars.<sup>53</sup>

The commission refused to grant free water to the public schools on September 20 because it was felt this would "encourage waste."<sup>54</sup> At this meeting a proposal of the park commission was turned down. In October however, four thousand dollars was allocated to purchase blocks eighty-one, ninety, ninety-one and one hundred for use as a colored park and improvements to the property. The purchase of the land alone cost twenty-eight hundred dollars.<sup>55</sup>

The Neptune Meter Company realized \$10,750.00 of the city's money for one thousand water meters. Again, the low bid was not accepted; the Worthington Pump and Manufacturing Company bid eight thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars.<sup>56</sup>

Despite the lack of public interest in the library the commission set aside one mill for support of the existent library and the surplus would go into a fund that would eventually provide for a new structure. Needless to say, this was a waste of time.<sup>57</sup>

The residents of Mulholland Park petitioned the commission in October to legally recognize the name of that part of the city; it was done so. The following month, Miss Mary Mulholland,

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 299.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 303.

owner of the Bronson house, offered to give the city enough land on the west side of her property for a street in exchange for freedom from paving liens during her lifetime. The offer was rejected. This matter came up again in March, 1925, when the commission was favorably disposed to accept the offer.<sup>58</sup> Second Street would thereby extend north from Madison Street. She was exempted from liens accruing from improvements to the extension.<sup>59</sup>

The commission authorized the firm of Marx and Shafton to draw up plans for a new jail on October 8; it was to be located on the corner of Reid and Sixth Streets, but a petition from residents of that area protested its location there. The plans then called for the new jail to be built on a city-owned lot between Reid and Lemon Streets on Ninth.<sup>60</sup> W. J. Banks and Son got the contract to construct the new jail on March 3, 1925, for nine thousand seven hundred and six dollars.<sup>61</sup>

The municipal election for 1924 was scheduled for December 2. There were still nine wards, but in some instances the polling places were changed.

Walter McNally was elected mayor and L. W. Warren succeeded R. J. Hancock as commissioner. The commission pendulum swung more toward the conservative side despite the fact that an \$87,000.00 bond issue had been approved by the voters in this

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 318.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 354.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.



election. The money was to be used for street improvements as it was readily determined that the initial bond issue would not meet the needs of the street system.<sup>62</sup>

TABLE 26  
VOTING STATIONS AND PRECINCTS, 1924<sup>a</sup>

Wards	
Ward 1	Gay's Store
Ward 2	Glass's Store
Ward 3	EL Perfecto Cigar Factory
Ward 4	Fire Station
Ward 5	Courthouse
Ward 6	Merwin's Garage
Ward 7	Blake's Garage
Ward 8	Brown's Store
Ward 9	Coburn's Store

<sup>a</sup>Palatka, "City Commission Minutes," May 16, 1922 to January 5, 1926, p. 320.

Palatka's most impressive ceremony for 1924 was that attendant to the dedication of the Confederate Memorial Cornerstone laid on the square. The event occurred on Saturday, April 26, with two organizations participating. The Pattern Anderson Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was in charge of the overall program and the Masons provided the ritual.

The program began with the proverbial parade from Lemon and First to the courthouse square. Judge A. V. Long was the main speaker and had with him " . . . a tattered emblem, bullet-scarred, wind-frayed and sun-faded remnant of what was once the

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 331.

flag of the forty-Seventh Georgia Regiment."<sup>63</sup> The flag had been loaned him by Mrs. G. W. M. Williams of Pomona Park, whose son commanded the regiment until he was killed in 1864. It had thirty-two bullet holes in it.<sup>64</sup>

The Reverend E. H. Cheshire, formerly a Georgia resident, recognized the flag and asked, "May I see it? May I handle it? It's the flag I love and have longed to see."<sup>65</sup> He " . . . dropped to his knees and wept as he pressed the flag to his breast and kissed it."<sup>66</sup>

The News painted the scene:

One grizzled old Veteran of the sixties saw, for the first time in sixty years, the shrapnel-torn banner under which he fought four long, bloody years. Many wept with him when he fell upon his knees and kissed the flag he had followed across the Sanguinary fields of the Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain and around Resseca [sic].<sup>67</sup>

Florida's finest store opened on May 2; F. J. Fearnside, President of Fearnside Clothing Company, came to Palatka in 1891 with C. A. Frennagar to open a tailor shop and haberdashery at 318 Lemon Street. The enterprise failed after the freeze of 1896 but Fearnside opened his own shop bearing that name. By 1901 the business had grown to the extent that it was necessary for him to move to a two story fram structure at the corner of Lemon and Third Streets. He occupied that building until moving

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<sup>63</sup>Palatka Daily News, April 28, 1924.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.,

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

into the new quarters, later known as the Browning Fearnside Company.

He initially called it the "Quality Clothing Store." On opening night, no one was expected to, or permitted to, according to his advertisement, purchase anything.<sup>68</sup>

The old steamer "Pilot Boy" had been sitting near mid-channel in the harbor, one end resting on the river bottom, when H. M. de Montmollin, one of its owners, announced the vessel would be raised, stripped and converted to a barge in May.<sup>69</sup>

Any marine activity now received a considerable amount of attention, and the "Ida May" was no exception. Captain G. C. Parramore was in command of the ten-ton craft which provided service between Palatka and Eureka on a weekly basis, leaving Eureka on Wednesday mornings and returning Friday.<sup>70</sup> Such was the state of waterfront activity.

Sheriff Hagan resigned in September. He accepted a position as a State Inspector, and was succeeded by his deputy, Will Cannon.<sup>71</sup>

In August, the cornerstone of the old Methodist Church was removed. When its contents were examined it was discovered that they were ruined. A tin box had been imbedded in the cement block and when exposed to air, they crumbled so as to be " . . . almost unrecognizable."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., April 30, 1924.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., May 14, 1924.

<sup>70</sup>Times-Herald, June 20, 1924.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., December 17, 1924.

<sup>72</sup>Palatka Daily News, August 11, 1924.

The old church dated to 1885; in the cornerstone was a copy of the old Palatka Daily News dated February 25; an old Bible; a copy of the Southern Sun dated November 28, 1888; a Christian Advocate of the same date; and other fragments of printed material that could not be identified. One dime and two pennies were also in the container.<sup>73</sup>

The cornerstone for the new church had arrived in Palatka, but it had as yet to be laid.<sup>74</sup>

A toll road from Palatka to Florahome dominated the county commission meeting for October 29. Recent expenditures of over \$80,000.00 " . . . have as yet to result in a good road" to that place.<sup>75</sup> Putnam County had twenty miles of brick-paved road, nine feet wide on January 1, 1924. By March, 1928, this had been expanded to include forty-eight and a half miles of rock-surfaced roads and seventeen miles of road under construction. All these were sixteen feet wide.<sup>76</sup>

Editor Guerry pointed out that postal receipts for money orders in a six day period of time totalled one thousand nine hundred ninety-one dollars and fifty-four cents on December 4. He deplored the fact that all this money left Palatka, inasmuch as:

. . . the splendid stocks shown in Palatka, and the conservative charges which are made for all classes of goods handled, make the sending away for Christmas good or any goods

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., October 30, 1924.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., March 19, 1928.

entirely needless.<sup>77</sup>

Palatka-ism prevailed.

The city auditorium neared completion in April and the city pool opened on June 1, 1925. Reid Street was extended twelve feet on the north side so as to accommodate the widening of the street.

In August it was announced that Frank Parker Stockbridge, the "foremost publicist," would visit later in the month so as to study " . . . this section of America's wonderland." Stockbridge wrote a great deal relating to Florida and in honor of his efforts, he was declared by the city commission, "Palatka's first and only honorary citizen . . . now and forever."<sup>78</sup>

The prosperous Twenties affected Palatka as they did the rest of the country. In the budget for 1926, beginning January 1, the second largest appropriation was destined to provide a golf course at a cost of \$15,000.00. A total of \$24,050.00 was appropriated for the streets. Other anticipated expenditures can be found in Table 27.

The subdivision of Forest Park was formally approved on September 28; the next day it was announced that the area would be provided with streetlights.<sup>79</sup>

The first mechanized street sweeper was purchased by the city in October, 1925, for sixty-five hundred dollars.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., December 4, 1924.

<sup>78</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 387.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 408.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 410.

TABLE 27  
PROPOSED BUDGET, 1926<sup>a</sup>

Item	Amount
Police Department . . . . .	\$ 9,375.00
Advertising . . . . .	9,000.00
Library . . . . .	6,500.00
Fire Department . . . . .	6,075.00
Band . . . . .	6,000.00
Parks . . . . .	5,500.00

<sup>a</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1922-1926," p. 406.

As the year closed, several political issues were acted on: the legislature was petitioned on November 17 for permission to rewrite the city charter;<sup>81</sup> a bond issue for street improvements totalling \$157,000.00 passed on December 1;<sup>82</sup> and it was announced that Palatka's new mayor was Frank E. Weymer. He received a total of forty-two votes. J. H. Yelverton was elected to the commission receiving forty-one votes. The other commissioners were R. F. Adams, L. W. Warren and L. D. Philips.<sup>83</sup>

There was one great change in Palatka's waterfront in November, 1925. The Florida East Coast Railway erected a new bridge on virtually the same location as the original structure. The old bridge was towed up the river and grounded as the new one was fitted into place. The replacement cost \$2,500,000.00 and featured the largest " . . . jack-knife bridge in the United

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 419.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., P. 421.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 422.

States."<sup>84</sup>

The new mayor inaugurated a short-lived custom referred to as the "Mayor's Banquet." One hundred and seventy-five guests attended the unprecedented affair on January 4.<sup>85</sup>

A strong attempt to bring attention to the importance of the river as a means of transportation occurred in early 1926. The commission had been toying with the idea of constructing municipal docks and warehouses in 1924, providing for funds in the bond issue of that year, and interest intensified in January, 1926, when the ship "Port of Palatka" was launched. This vessel, and others, would ply the waters between Palatka and New York.

The first ship to arrive in Palatka was the "S. S. Glendoyle" owned by the Strachan Line of Savannah. The ship entered the harbor on February 5, 1926, at eleven a.m.<sup>86</sup> The "Glendoyle" was two hundred and eighty-nine feet long and displaced two thousand two hundred and forty-six tons. It was loaded with cement and washed gravel for the Phoenix Utilities Company. It drew twelve and a half feet of water. The first experience in Palatka was not a happy one for the vessel ran aground on a mud bank in the middle of the harbor. It was unloaded onto barges so as to lighten the ship and free it at high tide.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Florida Times Union November 27, 1925.

<sup>85</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 5, 1926.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., February 5, 1926.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

The next day wasn't any happier: the Atlantic Coast Line informed Captain Berry he could tie up to its dock, but at one end of the pier there was only six feet of water. The Southern Railway Company was not conducive to allowing the ship to dock on its property at all. Captain Berry told the city commission, "Palatka should have her own docks."<sup>88</sup>

The commission decided to go ahead with the plans to construct the docks on February 5. The four to one vote provided for the structure to be located just to the north of the foot of Laurel Street.<sup>89</sup>

The "Glendoyle" left at seven-thirty on the morning of February 9. The first mate was not happy. Someone had stolen his binoculars during the ship's stay in Palatka.<sup>90</sup>

It was decided that these vessels would use the Merryday docks until the municipal docks were constructed. On February 13 the "Glendoyle's" sister ship, "Doneta," entered Palatka's harbor without incident.<sup>91</sup>

February also realized another proposed bond issue. It was obvious that any attempts to do anything about the street situation would have to be done on a much larger scale. The commissioners approved a referendum for streets and sidewalks totalling \$530,000.00 on the fifth.<sup>92</sup> Palatka had twenty-four

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., February 6, 1926.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., February 9, 1926.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., February 13, 1926.

<sup>92</sup> Palatka, "City Council Minutes, January 8, 1926, to December 9, 1931," p. 8.



miles of paved road in January.<sup>93</sup> The new program would add seven to ten miles to this figure.<sup>94</sup>

The county voters approved a road and bridge bond issue on February 16 for \$1,250,000.00 by a majority of five to one, Hollister being the only community in the county to vote against it. The bridge was to be at least thirty feet in width. Construction began right away at the Reid Street location, finally determined to be the site. The construction engineer established his headquarters in the Merryday warehouse and refused to abandon it so as to accommodate the steamships.<sup>95</sup>

The first cofferdam was completed during the week of March 15 and concrete was poured into it during the following week.<sup>96</sup>

The need for hotel accommodations was felt after the old Putnam House was torn down. A step to rectify this situation was taken on February 18 when J. E. Bennett of the East Florida Savings and Trust Company offered to match each dollar raised for a new \$500,000.00 hotel. In response, \$200,000.00 was subscribed at a meeting held in the courthouse.<sup>97</sup> Four days later the Palatka Hotel and Industrial Company was established with Bennett as president, Howell A. Davis as vice-president, Frank E. Waymer as treasurer, W. P. Dineen as the legal agent and

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<sup>93</sup> Palatka Daily News, January 6, 1926.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., February 6, 1926.

<sup>95</sup> Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931." p. 14.

<sup>96</sup> Palatka Daily News, April 7, 1926.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., February 19, 1926.

T. H. Tinsley as the financial agent.<sup>98</sup>

Fannie Ackerman wrote the commission on March 2 offering to sell her property on the river, an old sawmill location, for \$18,000.00 as a city dock site. The commission agreed to purchase it and more definite plans for the structure were taken.<sup>99</sup> The dock itself was to be three hundred and sixty feet long and eighty-two feet wide. The Palatka Boat and Construction Company received the contract for \$24,485.25 to drive the piling and plank the structure. The warehouse, costing \$21,750.00 was to be three hundred feet long and seventy-one feet wide. It would be completed in ninety days.<sup>100</sup>

The "Glendoyle" had another unhappy experience on the St. Johns. It ran into the Main Street dock in Jacksonville when the steering failed and sixty feet of the dock was torn away.<sup>101</sup> It arrived at Palatka for the last time on March 12, for two days later it was taken off the Palatka run and began ferrying sugar from Cuba.<sup>102</sup> The "Glendolin," a ship owned by the same company as "Glendoyle," also terminated its run to Palatka; the reason for the enterprise had been based only on one demand, that of materials needed for the Phoenix Utilities Company which was constructing the physical facilities of the Florida Power and Light Company. The Phoenix company discontinued using the

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., February 23, 1926.

<sup>99</sup> Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 12.

<sup>100</sup> Palatka Daily News, March 3, 1926.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., March 6, 1926.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., March 24, 1926.

shipping line and began bringing its construction materials in via rail.<sup>103</sup> Thus ended Palatka's port facility. The only future activity on the river would be recreational in nature, for all time to come. The Clyde Line discontinued service to Palatka in July, 1928.<sup>104</sup>

Plans for the hotel building progressed; it was to be a one hundred and fifty room structure at the corner of Reid and Second Streets.<sup>105</sup> By June the financial goal was within \$25,000.00 of being reached. The campaign had slowed, however, for now " . . . everyone was being given the chance to purchase stock."<sup>106</sup> Not everyone took advantage of the opportunity. The goal wasn't met and Palatka's hotel program terminated.

A fight with the Atlantic Coast Line Railway followed. Back in February, a committee went to Wilmington, Delaware, to determine whether the city could lease the old Vertrees warehouse and waterfront property now owned by that railroad. The committee got a definite negative answer and the News screamed in its headline for March 6, 1926, "A.C.L. Stifling City;" in an attempt to pacify irate Palatkans the company announced in May that it would spend \$400,000.00 in the town to erect a three hundred ton electric coaling station, several miles of railroad sidings and a double-tracked bridge over Rice Creek.<sup>107</sup> That

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<sup>103</sup>Ibid., April 14, 1926.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1928.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., March 14, 1926.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., June 12, 1926.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., May 24, 1926.

ended the screaming.

The proposed range law instigated political controversy in March. The Putnam County Realty Board announced it would ". . . not support any delegate favoring open range in Florida."<sup>108</sup> Its spokesman, C. W. Loveland, stated, "This thing of the worship of the sacred cow must pass. We are not going to permit a few mangy, moss-eaten cattle to destroy this beautiful country."<sup>109</sup>

Representative McKenzie made his opinion known a month later; he refused to introduce any bill other than one calling for a referendum on the issue.<sup>110</sup>

The Palatka Land and Water Company, a development firm, dubbed the Devil's Elbow promontory as "South Palatka" on March 30.<sup>111</sup>

On April 6 the commission extended Reid Street through block number sixteen to open and widen that thoroughfare so as to accommodate the new bridge already under construction.<sup>112</sup>

Later in the month it was announced that the State Road Department would ". . . pave the Gainesville Highway from the city limits to Seventh Street;" the project would include the construction of an underpass at Forward and Twelfth Streets which would cost \$37,500.00.<sup>113</sup> The commission was agreeable

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., March 27, 1926.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., April 23, 1926.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., March 30, 1926.

<sup>112</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 28.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

to this, but it was never realized.

In mid-April the Chamber of Commerce swung toward the ultra-conservative by urging a ban on carnivals which were " . . . detrimental to the health and moral tone of the community." The argument was that they took money out of the city, and that they took away grocery and rent money. It recommended a three hundred dollar per day license fee for all such enterprises.<sup>114</sup>

The Putnam National Bank purchased bonds totalling \$371,000.00 for general improvements on April 27. Palatka had run its course in civic projects and expansion by June 15; however, in a referendum relating to a \$175,000.00 bond issue, only one hundred and fifty-four electors participated. They turned down, by a vote of eighty-one to seventy-one, the sale of \$30,000.00 in bonds to construct the municipal docks and warehouses. They voted down, by an eighty-one to seventy-three margin, an issue for \$87,500.00 to expand the water works. They voted for, by a vote of eighty-two to seventy, a \$57,500.00 expansion of the sewer system.<sup>115</sup> The chief factor here was the condemnation of four hundred surface toilets by City Manager Dobbs on May 18.<sup>116</sup>

In July the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad offered to construct an all steel overpass on Main Street if the State Road

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<sup>114</sup>Palatka Daily News, April 13, 1926.

<sup>115</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 46.

<sup>116</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 18, 1926.

Department approved.<sup>117</sup> This was never realized.

The commission acted on the statement of R. E. Caldwell, a merchant, who in May pointed out that Palatka's streets were not properly marked; he said, "I don't suppose there are half a dozen streets with name plates . . . ."<sup>118</sup> Two days later it was announced that all streets intersecting Lemon from the river to Thirteenth would be given "name plates."<sup>119</sup>

"Sporting Life" was the first film shown in the new Lincoln Theatre, the first Negro theatre in Palatka, located on Eleventh Street between Main and Madison. Built at a cost of \$10,000.00, the facility accommodated five hundred persons.<sup>120</sup>

A. R. Haile was elected as President of the Chamber of Commerce on June 25; in December he was elected Mayor of Palatka.

The commission called for another bond issue on July 20; this one, again for municipal improvements, was also for \$175,000.00.<sup>121</sup>

On August 17 the commissioners agreed to purchase the steel for the erection of warehouses and a new city dock, the cost of which would be \$15,500.00.<sup>122</sup>

The first resignation of the commission occurred on September 24 when J. H. Yelverton left because of " . . . the press of

<sup>117</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 51.

<sup>118</sup>Palatka Daily News, May 22, 1926.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., May 24, 1926.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., June 4, 1926.

<sup>121</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 60.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

time." His resignation was to be effective November 5.<sup>123</sup> Commissioner Adams suggested A. L. Teaff be appointed to fill the vacancy. He was.<sup>124</sup>

The new budget occupied the efforts of the commission on October 13. Generally, everything was cut back. The city manager's salary was reduced to four thousand two hundred dollars. He resigned. Chowning Cauthorn, former City Clerk, assumed the responsibility on October 19. Ed Chouteau, Jr. was appointed to fill that office.<sup>125</sup>

TABLE 28  
PROPOSED BUDGET, 1927<sup>a</sup>

ITEM	
Water Department . . . . .	\$26,900.00
Sanitary Department. . . . .	18,000.00
Golf Course. . . . .	11,000.00
Police Department. . . . .	10,000.00
Fire Department. . . . .	9,000.00
Library. . . . .	4,350.00
Parks, playgrounds . . . . .	3,500.00

<sup>a</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 92.

The trains operating within Palatka's city limits had to observe a ten mile per hour speed limit after October 19. The commission, in the same meeting, appropriated \$10,000.00 to advertise Palatka. All green fees on the golf course were lowered to equate with the rates of residents of the city in an attempt

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

to attract gold buffs from St. Augustine.<sup>126</sup> The squeeze was on.

The \$175,000.00 bond issue was reduced to \$45,000.00. In a referendum on November 1 three hundred and thirty-one Palatkans voted in favor, by a majority of two hundred and seventy-five to fifty-three, to construct more streets and sidewalks.<sup>127</sup>

In the annual election, A. R. Haile was again elected mayor; the commission consisted of R. F. Admas, E. W. Elliott, A. L. Teaff and L. W. Warren.<sup>128</sup>

The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad agreed to construct the overpass between Forward and Willow Streets on January 20, 1927. When completed, it was not all that popular. During a rain, the road took on the characteristics of a "mill race" beneath the structure.<sup>129</sup> The underpass opened in February, 1928. The total cost was \$250,000.00; \$40,000.00 of which was paid by the city.<sup>130</sup>

Even though the commission had approved the purchase of the Ackerman property for the dock site, it hadn't actually been done. This dock issue was the big political controversy for Palatka in 1927. A proposal to lease the property of the old Stanton Foundry was suggested but after leasing the land

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<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 95 ff.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>130</sup>Palatka Daily News, February 29, 1928.



for fifteen years at twelve hundred dollars annually, the commission was not able to determine what the ultimate purchase price would be and that possibility was dropped as an alternative.<sup>131</sup>

There was opposition to the Ackerman property because the water there was shallow; only private yachts could use the facility, but Commissioner Elliott moved that it be purchased, and the motion passed by a vote of four to one.<sup>132</sup>

The next meeting produced another problem to consider. The Zachary Veneer Mill had a factory on the Ackerman property and not until July 7 was it determined that Zachary was not concerned about locating the dock there if it would not interfere with his operation. Things apparently quickly deteriorated at this meeting, however, for legal steps were suggested to have the city condemn the land for non-payment of fees but no one knew what the fees amounted to. The meeting then adjourned.<sup>133</sup>

On August 6 it was suggested that Hotel Street be opened through to the river; the question "Who owns the land?" indicated that the temper of the previous meeting involved a power play designed to benefit a certain faction. The issue died.<sup>134</sup>

The dock was finally completed in January, 1928. It was located at the foot of Laurel Street and was an "L" shaped

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<sup>131</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 160 ff.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

<sup>133</sup>Ibid., p. 162 ff. Author's note: This whole entry, dated July 7, 1927, is crossed out in pencil and two blank sheets of bond have been pasted over it.

<sup>134</sup>Ibid., p. 176.

structure extending one hundred feet into the river. At the outer end was a forty foot leg, which accommodated vessels up to a twelve foot draft.<sup>135</sup>

Sheriff R. J. Hancock came to the commission meeting on September 6 asking for one thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars from that body, and similiar amounts from the county commission and the bond trustees, so as to provide five thousand dollars for the celebration of the opening of the new bridge.<sup>136</sup> The commissioners concurred.

Three weeks later it was pointed out that work on the approaches to the bridge must be hurried if the street would be open in time for the planned dedication on Armistice Day.<sup>137</sup>

September was characterized by Klan violence. The mayor and Sheriff Hancock were called to Tallahassee by the governor to consider the evidence accumulated in the investigation of sixty-three beatings in the county throughout the year. The "Klan sympathizers claimed the violence was directed against bootleggers and bawdy-house operators."<sup>138</sup>

The budget for 1928 was devised in October also. The total appropriation was higher than for the previous year and for the first time, the funds allotted the fire department exceeded those for the police department by three hundred and

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<sup>135</sup>Palatka Daily News, January 14, 1928.

<sup>136</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 176.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>138</sup>David Chalmers, "The KKK in the Sunshine State," Florida Historical Quarterly, Volume XLII (January, 1964).

fifty dollars. The fire department received \$11,000.00, but its budget, as was the police department's, was cut by one thousand dollars.<sup>139</sup>

The bridge was dedicated on Armistice Day 1928; a gala celebration marked the affair which memorialized Putnam County's war veterans. Five days later the complaint arose that there were people racing on Reid Street with exhaust "cut outs" open.<sup>140</sup>

As the old man said, ". . . we live a life that was far less strenuous than what we are putting up with now."<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>Palatka, "City Council Minutes, 1926-1931," p. 185.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>141</sup>Palatka Daily News, February 29, 1924.

## CONCLUSION

Geographical circumstance has been beneficial and detrimental to Palatka. In a sense the past has been more dynamic than later periods of development in its history. Eighty-five years ago the town represented the southernmost urban area in Florida and the terminal point for railroad and steamboat alike, the latter due to the nature of the St. Johns River to its mouth in that it is deeper and much wider, therefore, more conducive to accommodating larger vessels.

It has been the victim of natural disaster. The citrus industry centered in the Palatka vicinity through the 1880's, but a series of severe freezes especially during the subsequent decade forced the industry further south. This coincided with, and in part instigated, the development of lower east coast Florida.

Manmade disaster also affected Palatka. Nearly every town had its destructive fire and Palatka was no exception. The problem here was that the fire of 1884 occurred at the time when the railroad was usurping the position of the steamboat and only slightly preceded the great freeze era of the Nineties. The attendant change and confusion retarded maturation in the political sense and a period of empire-building ensued, too often resulting in so much complexity that little if anything was accomplished.

On the positive side, strong personalities lent stability to the town's development. Men such as Richard Adams, Edward Grill, G. M. Davis, Hubbard Hart and the Tilghman and Wilson brothers all added fuel to Palatka's fire of progress. They accomplished great things with what the area had to offer and built Palatka and Putnam County to the extent that both played a more than significant role in state affairs as compared to the present.

Fundamentally, some limitations still exist. The area has always relied on the St. Johns River and now that stream is emerging once again as an important factor in the town's development. The Cross State Barge Canal is mis-named. The Palatka area would do well to seriously consider the greater potential of the system as fulfilling a recreational function as compared to its future as a means of commercial transportation.

Too many pipelines, too thorough an overland transportation network, and too few bulk resources exist to justify the canal as other than recreational in the long run. There is no real market for bulk commodities in other than the subsistence sense of the term. This portion of the South is simply not characterized by large urban areas. Palatka needs to re-evaluate its situation; it has rail service; it has one of the few bridges across the river; it is in close proximity to some of the finest recreational sites in the state, many of which have as yet to be discovered by large numbers of visitors, both residents and non-residents. In our age of dynamicism and mobility we need to constantly cater to that which we can most efficiently produce,

and Palatka's greatest asset is its natural attractiveness, or could be. This involves a change in thinking, a change in attitude, a turn even further from isolationism and homogeneity of culture so as to attract ever greater numbers of people here by virtue of the services offered. It won't be easy; it won't be inexpensive. It could be successful. It should be successful.

APPENDIX A: PALATKA CITY OFFICIALS<sup>a</sup>

1853	Mayor:	W. W. Tumblin
1878	Mayor: Marshal:	Joseph H. Mann J. F. Santina
1879	Mayor: Council President: Aldermen:  Clerk: Treasurer: Marshal:	Henry R. Teasdale Joseph H. Mann R. J. Adams, James Burt, Calvin Gillis, Calvin M. Smith William F. Forward Henry F. Peterman, Jr. Andrew Shalley
1880	Mayor: Council President:	Henry R. Teasdale Joseph H. Mann
1881	Mayor: Council President:	Henry R. Teasdale Joseph H. Mann
1882	Mayor:	Henry R. Teasdale
1883	Mayor: Council President:	Henry R. Teasdale Joseph Sawyer
1884	Mayor:	Henry R. Teasdale
1885	Mayor: Marshal:	Henry R. Teasdale B. F. Lassiter
1886	Mayor:	Henry R. Teasdale
1887	Mayor: Council Chairman:	James E. Baldwin Henry R. Teasdale
1888	Mayor: Council Chairman: Clerk:	Henry R. Teasdale D. A. Boyd Cook Carleton
1889	Mayor:	W. J. Webb

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<sup>a</sup>This list is not complete because of the lack of existent records identifying the persons involved.

1893 Mayor: Martin Griffin, Jr.  
 Council Chairman: Joseph R. Dunn  
 Clerk: Pierre Pratt

1895 Mayor: Martin Griffin, Jr.  
 Council President: James D. Points

1896 Mayor: Benjamin J. Grooms  
 Treasurer: George Weller  
 Police Chief: M. J. Truman

1899 Mayor: George E. Gay  
 Aldermen: G. H. Foster, G. W. Fowler, B. I. Gay,  
 J. M. Hodges, R. C. Howell, William  
 Ivers, S. J. Kemmerly, J. H. Merryday,  
 J. D. Points, P. A. Smith, P. H. Sterges,  
 M. W. Stewart, L. C. Stevens, Walter  
 Thomas

1903 Mayor: A. M. Steen

1904 Mayor: M. M. Vickers  
 Aldermen: Arthur R. Castonel, B. I. Gay, Tom  
 Holden, E. T. Holmes, William Ivers,  
 T. O. Livingston, James D. Points

1906 Mayor: Antonio Usina  
 Council President: Howell A. Davis

1908<sup>b</sup> Mayor: Howell A. Davis  
 Council President: H. O. Hamm  
 Aldermen: Joe Adams, A. L. Browning, B. I. Gay,  
 J. S. Goza, J. H. Haughton, Tom Holden,  
 W. A. Merryday, D. W. Ramsaur, Tom M.  
 Ray, A. Usina, F. D. Wattles, J. H.  
 Yelverton, Jr.  
 Clerk: A. T. Triay  
 Police Chief: P. M. Hagan (\$75.00 monthly)  
 Fire Chief: C. H. Wigg (effective December 1, 1908  
 at a salary of \$50.00 monthly)  
 Scavenger: L. L. Trapp (\$55.00 monthly)

1909 Council President: F. D. Wattles  
 Aldermen: Joe Adams, J. A. Baer, B. I. Gay, J. S.  
 Goza, J. H. Haughton, Tom Holden, D. W.  
 Ramsaur, Tom M. Ray, L. N. Robinson,  
 A. Usina, F. H. Wilson, J. H. Yelverton,  
 Jr.

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<sup>b</sup>Apparently a change in governmental structure occurred prior to this year; the mayor's term was of four years duration and the aldermen served three year terms. Elections were held in April.



1909 Police Chief: R. A. Varnes (\$53.20 monthly)  
Municipal Judge: E. N. Calhoun  
City Attorney: H. Y. Strunz (\$50.00 monthly)

1910 Council President: B. I. Gay  
Aldermen: Joe Adams, J. A. Baer, D. J. Coughlin,  
P. M. Hagan, J. H. Haughton, Tom Holden,  
D. A. Mullis, L. N. Robinson, L. A.  
Smith, A. Usina, J. V. Walton, J. H.  
Yelverton, Jr.

1911 Council President: B. I. Gay  
Aldermen: Joe Adams, W. H. Cannon, D. J. Coughlin,  
H. M. Fearnside, J. H. Houghton, Tom  
Holden, R. C. Howell, L. N. Robinson,  
L. A. Smith, T. J. Thompson, J. V.  
Walton, F. H. Wilson  
Municipal Judge: J. E. Marshall  
City Attorney: A. A. Odum  
Policemen:<sup>c</sup> T. E. Hudson, C. M. Livingston  
Scavengers: Benjamin Cannon and L. L. Trapp

1912 Mayor:<sup>d</sup> J. E. Warren  
Council President: J. H. Yelverton, Jr.  
Aldermen: Joe Adams, C. W. Buddington, W. H. Cannon,  
H. M. Fearnside, J. H. Haughton, W. A.  
Hicks, W. P. Merriam, W. H. Minton, L.  
N. Robinson, L. A. Smith, A. Usina, F.  
H. Wilson  
City Attorney: Julian C. Calhoun (resigned October 1,  
1912; replaced by the firm of Hilburn  
and Merryday)  
City Engineer: Stallings  
City Physician: Chandler

1913 Council President: J. H. Yelverton, Jr.  
Aldermen: A. T. Browning, C. W. Buddington, W. H.  
Cannon, H. M. Fearnside, B. I. Gay, W.  
A. Hicks, Leo Jacobsen, W. P. Merriam,  
J. H. Millican, W. H. Minton, J. M.  
Pounds, L. N. Robinson, F. H. Wilson  
Municipal Judge: Julian C. Calhoun  
Police Chief: C. M. Livingston (post created May 6,  
1913 at \$100.00 monthly; J. Q. Allen was  
the only other officer)  
Fire Chief: E. D. Sims (hired February 18, 1913 at  
\$75.00 monthly; M. G. Phillips replaced  
him on April 15, 1913. The first assist-  
ant was Emmitt Sims and the second  
assistant was L. F. King)

<sup>c</sup>The position of Chief of Police was vacant.

<sup>d</sup>The mayor's term of office was reduced to three years.

- 1914 Council President: J. H. Yelverton, Jr.  
Aldermen: Joe Adams, W. H. Cannon, H. A. Davis, H. M. Fearnside, B. I. Gay, Leo Jacobsen, C. H. Kennerly, W. McNally, W. P. Merriam, J. H. Millican, J. M. Pounds, L. N. Robinson, F. H. Wilson
- 1915 Mayor: S. J. Kennerly (elected in January died in office October 7, 1915; the office remained vacant)  
Council President: W. P. Merriam  
Aldermen: J. B. Austin, P. J. Becks, C. W. Buddington, H. A. Davis, H. M. Fearnside, B. I. Gay, B. E. Jarrett, C. H. Kennerly, W. McNally, R. E. Neck, L. N. Robinson, J. V. Walton  
Fire Chief: M. G. Phillips (B. C. Pearce was appointed second assistant on June 1)
- 1916 Council President: R. E. Neck  
Aldermen: J. B. Austin, P. J. Becks (died in office July 6, 1916; he was not replaced), C. W. Buddington, W. N. Coffee (resigned March 17, 1916), B. I. Gay, B. E. Harret, Leo Jacobsen, W. McNally, F. T. Merrill, J. Pursley, E. E. Ramsey, L. N. Robinson, L. L. Trapp  
Fire Chief: M. G. Phillips (B. C. Pearce was promoted to first assistant on June 20, 1916, when E. D. Sims was drafted. Pearce resigned on October 20, 1916)
- 1917 Council President: B. I. Gay  
Aldermen: W. N. Borgan, M. B. Cochrane, D. J. Coughlin, W. H. Dougherty, A. M. Hedick, Leo Jacobsen, W. McNally, F. T. Merrill, J. A. Nottage, J. Pursley, E. E. Ramsey, J. D. Ringham, L. L. Trapp  
Police Chief: L. M. Livingston
- 1918 Mayor: W. P. Merriam  
Council President: F. T. Merrill  
Aldermen: M. B. Cochrane, D. J. Coughlin, W. P. Dineen, B. I. Gay, A. M. Hedick, L. Jacobsen, W. McNally, Morgan, J. A. Nottage, J. D. Ringham, C. H. Rowton, C. C. Smith, L. L. Trapp
- 1920 Aldermen: A. T. Browning, D. J. Coughlin, W. P. Dineen, J. Pursley, C. H. Rowton, A. Usina
- 1921 Mayor: H. M. Fearnside

- 1922 Mayor: Dr. A. M. Steen  
 Council President: C. C. Smith  
 Aldermen: A. L. Browning, L. T. Buie, E. R. Conway,  
 W. B. Crane, B. I. Gay, B. E. Jarrett,  
 J. E. Johnson, H. Messmer, D. A. Mullis,  
 J. A. Nottage, J. Parsley, E. C. Pearce  
 (resigned December 19, 1922),  
 S. Q. Porter, W. F. Sapp, H. H. Van  
 Horne, W. A. Walton, J. L. Watts
- 1923 Mayor: A. H. Steen  
 Council President: C. C. Smith  
 Aldermen: A. L. Browning, L. T. Buie, E. R. Conway,  
 W. B. Crane, B. I. Gay, M. J. Hudson  
 B. E. Jarrett, J. E. Johnson, H. Messmer,  
 D. A. Mullis, J. A. Nottage, W. Nunn, J.  
 Pursley, H. H. Van Horne, J. L. Waits,  
 W. A. Walton, L. A. Warren  
 Police Chief: Cole Tavell
- 1924 Mayor: H. A. Davis  
 Commissioners: R. F. Adams, R. J. Hancock, Louis  
 Phillips, J. H. Yelverton, Jr.  
 City Manager: Oscar Dobbs (hired February 9, 1924)
- 1925 Mayor: Walter McNally  
 Commissioners: R. F. Adams, Louis Phillips, L. W. Warren,  
 J. H. Yelverton, Jr.
- 1926 Mayor: F. E. Waymer  
 Commissioners: R. F. Adams, Louis Phillips, L. W. Warren,  
 J. H. Yelverton, Jr. (resigned November 5,  
 1926; replaced by A. L. Teaff)
- 1927 Mayor: A. R. Haile  
 Commissioners: R. F. Adams, E. W. Elliott, A. L. Teaff,  
 L. W. Warren
- 1928 Mayor: R. E. Neck  
 Commissioners: E. W. Elliott, W. F. Sapp, A. L. Teaff,  
 L. W. Warren

APPENDIX B: PALATKA POSTMASTERS

Name	Date of Appointment
James B. Cole	August 17, 1841
Stanislaus Gliuski	October 30, 1848
Robert T. Boyd	June 2, 1849
Louis H. Rossignol	January 29, 1850
Robert Raymond Reid	March 8, 1851
Holston F. Powers	April 8, 1852
James B. Brown	April 12, 1853
Jesse A. Brush	November 11, 1854
Joseph R. Price	September 17, 1855
Tippoo S. Haughton	June 8, 1857
Samuel J. Cassels	December 8, 1858
James Bart	November 11, 1859
R. S. Butler	January 10, 1861
Ebenezer C. Hadlock	November 3, 1865
H. J. Bickford	May 2, 1866
Albert J. Dalton	June 27, 1866
Wesley C. Snow	March 16, 1868
Robert N. Ellis	March 7, 1873
Albert Ballard	March 24, 1873
Wesley C. Snow	April 4, 1877
Paul B. Laland	May 18, 1885
Benjamin Harrison	July 8, 1885
Frederic A. Garrison	February 21, 1890
W. P. Anderson	April 7, 1894
Dick M. Kirby	May 2, 1898
Harry Gray	November 22, 1913
Nelson A. Stumpe	January 1, 1918
George E. Gay	March 1, 1923

APPENDIX C: FORTS IN THE PALATKA AREA

<u>Name</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Location</u>
Brook(s)	Second Seminole War	Five miles east of Orange Springs, Putnam County
Brown	February 24, 1840	Ten miles east of Palatka, St. Johns County
Call	December 10, 1836	Volusia, Volusia County
Clark	Second Seminole War	Six miles west of Gainesville, Alachua County
Crane	Second Seminole War	Lake Pithlachocco
Drane	December, 1835	Ten miles south of Micanopy, Alachua County
Eleven (Number)	January, 1840	Near the Etoniah Scrub, Putnam County
Fulton	January, 1840	West bank of Crescent Lake, Putnam County, 29° .36' N.; 81° .31' W.
Gates	January, 1840	Opposite Fruitland, Putnam County
Gilleaud	January, 1840	Newnansville, Alachua County
Green	January, 1840	Garey's Ferry, headwaters of Black Creek
Hanson	January, 1840	Headwaters, Deep Creek
Harlee	January, 1840	On Black Creek, Clay County
Harney	January, 1840	Near Moultrie, St. Johns County
Heileman	January, 1840	East of Newnansville, Alachua County
Holmes	February 9, 1840	Eleven miles southwest of Palatka, Putnam County

<u>Name</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Location</u>
Hunter	February 9, 1840	Eleven and one-half miles south of Palatka, Putnam County
Joe Gre's (Gray's)	Spanish Era	Near Palatka, Putnam County
King	March, 1827	Near Silver Springs, Marion County
Kingsbury	Second Seminole War	Enterprise, Volusia County
Lawson	Second Seminole War	Four miles west southwest of Palatka, Putnam County
Mackay	Second Seminole War	Near the Oklawaha River, ten miles south of Orange Lake Creek, Marion County
McCoy	Second Seminole War	On the Oklawaha River Marion County
Micanopy	Second Seminole War	Micanopy, Alachua County
Moccasin Branch	Spanish Era	Near Orange Mills, Putnam County
New Buena Vista	Spanish Era	East of Palatka, Putnam County
Peyton	Second Seminole War	Five miles southwest of St. Augustine, St. Johns County, on Moultrie Creek
Picolata	Spanish Era	Picolata, St. Johns County
Pilatka	Second Seminole War (1837)	Palatka, General Jesup's Ordnance Depot
Russell	July 17, 1837	West Southwest of Ft. Brooks. Three miles east of the junction of Orange Creek and the Palatka-Tampa road
Searle	December 28, 1839	Six miles east of Picolata, St. Johns County
Shannon	July, 1838	Palatka, Putnam County

<u>Name</u>	<u>Established</u>	<u>Location</u>
Ten (Number)	Second Seminole War	Whetstone, near Fish Creek mouth, Putnam County
Ten East, Florida	Second Seminole War	Southeast bank of Lake Grandin, 29° .40' N.; 81° .50' W.
Volusia	Second Seminole War	South of Lake George, Putnam County
Wheelock	July 7, 1840	Orange Lake, Alachua County

APPENDIX D: SAND MOUNDS AND SHELL HEAPS

East Palatka  
Rice Creek  
Deep Creek  
Racey Point  
Picolata  
Brown's Landing  
St. Johns Landing  
Juniper Creek  
Silver Springs  
Lake George  
Forrester's Point  
Whetstone Point  
Palatka  
Rollestown  
Murphy's Island  
Buffalo Bluff  
Horse Landing  
Welaka  
Mt. Royal  
Norwalk  
Dryton's Island  
Salt Springs



APPENDIX E: PALATKA AREA NEWSPAPERS  
IN ORDER OF ESTABLISHMENT

<u>Name; Editor/Publisher</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Whig Banner; George Grouard, Jr.	6-21-1846	
Southern Sun	-- 1855	
Eastern Herald; George W. Pratt	-- 1869	Also known as Palatka Herald.
Putnam County Journal	1-27-1881	
Palatka Daily News	-- 1883	Oldest known issue: May 8, 1888; Vol. 5, #55.
Palatka Weekly News	11-15-1884	
Southern Sun; Joseph H. and Charles E. Warren	5- 7-1885	
Melrose Daylight; (?) Wallach	3-20-1886	
Florida Weekly News	5-20-1887	
Palatka Evening Herald; Pierre Pratt & Brothers	-- 1888	Oldest known issue May 23, 1889; Vol. 1, #215.
Palatka Weekly Herald; Pierre Pratt & Brothers	9-13-1889	
Palatka Daily Times	-- 1889	Oldest known issue December 11, 1889; Vol. 1, #32.
Palatka Weekly Times; A. T. Grovener	-- 1890	Oldest known issue June 12, 1890.
Palatka Daily Advertiser; Alex E. Wattles	-- 1894	Oldest known issue December 30, 1894, Vol. 3, #307; sold to Russell & Vickers in 1902, then merged into Palatka Daily News.

<u>Name; Editor/Publisher</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Palatka Times-Herald; H. A. B. McKenzie	-- 1894	Oldest known issue February 16, 1894; Vol. 1, #37.
The Evening Recorder; T. H. Livingston	-- 1896	Oldest known issue February 26, 1897, Vol. 1, #94; seven cents weekly.
Palatka Weekly Advertiser; Alex E. Wattles	8-31-1899	Published Thursdays
The East Floridian; T. B. Hartig & M. M. Vickers	-- 1900	Oldest known issue April 19, 1900; published Thursdays in Palatka National Bank Building.
Palatka News and Advertiser; William Russell	1- 9-1902	Published Thursdays
The New Florida	-- 1908	Oldest known issue June, 1912, Vol. 4, #4, published monthly.
Gem City Bulletin; Davis Publishing Company	8- -1912	Motto: "A Paper Edited and Published by Colored People for Colored People." Corner of Lemon and 8th.
San Mateo Item	4-12-1913	111 Water Street.
The Item	5-15-1913	
Palatka Daily Item; Tom W. Davis & G. S. Davis	-- 1914	Oldest known issue July 6, 1914, Vol. 1, #159.
Palatka Morning Post; H. P. Nerwich	11- 1-1914	113 1st Street; purchased by Palatka Daily News May 21, 1921.
Daily Democrat; T. W. Davis	11- -1915	
Palatka Daily News; Goode M. Guerry & M. M. Vickers	10- 1-1919	Vol. 1, #1, fifteen cents a week; published afternoons.
Palatka Progress and Tri-County Advertiser	-- 1924	Oldest known issue June 10, 1927, Vol. III, #18.

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