

# The Spanish River Papers

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OLD CITY HALL, HOME OF BOCA RATON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Jeanne Nixon Baur, Artist

A report to the membership of

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Among the recent acquisitions of the Boca Raton Historical Society are letters, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, and photographs of the T. M. Rickards family. From this collection, a gift of T. M. Rickards, Jr. of West Palm Beach, it is possible to gain a clearer picture of Boca Raton's "first" settler. In this issue of the Spanish River Papers will be found a series of letters telling of the first T. M. Rickards' earliest years in Florida.

Thomas Moore Rickards was born in Ohio in 1845. As a child he was taken to Missouri where he lived until 1876 when he migrated to Florida to escape northern winters. Although Missouri was a slave state and is often considered a southern state, Rickards always described himself as a "Yankee." The first series of letters, sent to a newspaper in Missouri, tells of Rickards' 1876 trip to Florida with specific references to the economic conditions in the southern states he passed through. At the time of his removal to Florida, Grant was still President of the United States and Reconstruction had not yet ended. Thus many people were interested in conditions in the South.

The second series of letters tells of a trip down the Withlacoochee River in 1880. A trained civil engineer, Rickards made a survey to determine if the river was suitable for navigation. The letters were also published by a Missouri newspaper, as was the last letter which describes a trip to America's "last frontier," the southeast coast of Florida. Traveling by boat, Celestial Railroad, and on foot, Rickards visited the area that would become his future home. Although these letters do not deal specifically with Boca Raton, they do allow the reader a glimpse into the life of a man who played a major role in the city's earliest history. A later edition of the Spanish River Papers will publish additional items from this collection.

The second part of the Spanish River Papers is designed to document the history of the Boca Raton Cemetery and present a record of the early burials. It is hoped that this will be an aid to those interested in genealogical research.

Donald W. Curl, Editor

"From Georgia," Near Vienna, Georgia, May 4th, 1876. To H.D.  
Catlin, Kirksville, Missouri.

Dear Sir:--I should have written to you sooner but have had so much work to do, and was so anxious to push forward, that I wrote to no one but my wife. Now that we are in the sand I can sit in the wagon and write as we go, which I am now doing. You wished me to report in regard to prospects for business in different localities. The only cities which have struck me as being particularly active and thrifty, were Nashville and Chattanooga, in Tennessee; and Dalton, Marietta and Atlanta in Georgia. I will take each in turn. Driving through the heavy timber of western Kentucky, we passed through three or four poor little towns which reaped a richer harvest from us than they had for weeks. In west Tennessee the people seemed as a general thing poor, very little trade in the towns and poor stocks of goods. In middle Tennessee, the country improves from the time you cross the Tennessee river (which we did at the mouth of Cypress near Reynoldsburg) until you reach Nashville. The land for fifty miles around Nashville is very productive, with fine farm residences and splendid farms. The owners are very wealthy, and seem to take pleasure in showing us their stock and farms. Nashville is well built and situated, about as large as Quincy, it commands and supplies the wholesale trade for a radius of a hundred miles. There are very many good business men and houses, and the merchants I met answered my many impertinent questions freely and satisfactorily. This city is the center of several heavy railroad lines, among them the Memphis & Nashville, Louisville & Nashville, Nashville & Chattanooga, a central southern line and some others. Situated as it is between the north and south and on a navigable river, showing prosperity on every corner, with the position she has reached, compared with other cities, with 35,000 inhabitants and a rich country around; her future is certain. The main roads leading over southern Tennessee are mostly turnpike. Chattanooga owes her present standing not, I think, to any energy or intelligence of her inhabitants, but to her geographical position, and the impetus given her by the war. Situated in a gap of the Cumerland mountains, on a bend of the Tennessee river, she is fast becoming a leading manufacturing point. The Tennesseans are a wholesouled, generous, hospitable people, with, as a general thing, medium intelligence and little enterprise. In Georgia, things are somewhat different. The first good town we struck was Dalton, in the western part of the state. There are about 2500 inhabitants. What I like about Dalton is the general appearance of neatness, and the lack of signs of poverty. The houses are good and well built, with an eye to taste as well as endurance. The grounds are all beautified with flowers, shrubs and ornamental work. The store houses, all retail, are filled with goods, good in quality and quantity. The men are affable, sociable and well dressed, and the women plentiful and pretty. The surrounding country is productive and well cultivated. Marietta is a well built town, on a high table land, 1100 feet above the level of the sea. Trade seemed to be active (d--n the roots) but I did not like the surrounding country, being very hilly, though full of iron mines, from which I suppose the most wealth is derived. Atlanta, the capital of Georgia, has a large rolling mill and iron works, is a railroad center, and has 35,000 inhabitants. The central part of town is devoted entirely to wholesale trade, and



the outskirts to the retail. It reminded me a little of St. Louis in this respect. There is one thing in the retail trade here I would not like, they all have such mixed stocks, even fresh beef and bread in the groceries, but they have a good trade with good profit. I have come to this conclusion from my observations, keep out of the little towns if you wish to do business in Georgia. We are now passing through heavy fine timber, the sight of which would throw a saw-miller into ecstasies. Big as a barrel and 100 feet to the first limb, without a knot and hardly tapering. Sometimes we pass through a dark, thick tangled canebrake and always a dark, deep rapid stream of tainted water running across the corduroy road, over which we bump along. But the roads are generally fine, being hard, solid, smooth sand in which our wagon hardly makes a track. The weather is fine, the rain being over, the sun shining and the air cool and pleasant. We enjoy the trip, being healthy as hounds and almost as ravenous. We have all gained much in health and strength. We have traveled some distance since I commenced this letter, and now the horses are drinking in the midst of a swamp, while all around us the long gray moss hangs ten feet pendant from the limbs of pine and cypress, an occasional snake or lizard looks out on us in wonder from his home in the long wet grass, while a hundred mocking birds in the thick shrubbery, are doing their level best to keep us cheerful in the swampy gloom. We saw some pretty creole women in Atlanta, well dressed, too. One other thing I do not like in Georgia, not so much the case in Tennessee; it is, every man has two prices on his goods, one for cash and one on time, generally 15 or 20 per cent. more; always taking a lien on the growing crops (though sometimes before it is planted) when on time. The general character of the farming class in Georgia, as it appears to the Yankees in Dixie, is a mixture of great hospitality, with so much inertness, no goaheaditiveness. In the northern part they told us we would turn back before we would reach Perry, on account of the sandhills. These sand hills are their great bugaboo. They are really a fine region reaching from a point, on our road, three miles north-west of Knoxville, to within six miles of Fort Valley, being about ten miles in extent, undulating but not hilly, covered with white sand, with here and there 300 or 400 yards of hard pulling, but we made thirty miles the day we came through, and did not drive faster than a walk anywhere. A young man at McDonough, attempted to terrify us with accounts of it, and advised us to turn back, I told him we were Yankees and didn't know how. "But" said he, "it is impossible to go through." "Young man," said I, "nothing is impossible to a Yankee." Our northern wagon excites the curiosity and inquiry of the natives, especially the patent lock or brake on the wheels. It is a stunner in their eyes. I will tell you how we manage through the day. We start at five in the morning, drive steadily until 11:30, water the horses at some spring or stream, (the country is full of them all the way from Columbus, Ky.) feed them and eat our dinner, which consists of coffee, bakers bread, batter cakes or corn dodger, as the case may be, bacon fried, an occasional squirrel, duck or quail, eggs till you can't rest, onions, potatoes &c. We start at one p.m., and drive steadily until six, I attend to the team as at dinner, Newt gets wood and water, and Jim cusses and makes batter cakes, corn dodger (as aforesaid) &c. We eat supper, light three pipes, wash the dishes, talk about "home, love and kindred," tie our horses among the leaves, make our own bed and sleep the sleep of the jolted, just and jolly. You must excuse the many errors as I

write while Jim and Newt are driving. Give my respects to Dr. Swetnam, to our chaplain, Rev. Theo. Miller, Jim Claggett and other friends who inquire. Should any one wish any particular inquiries answered, I will cheerfully do so through the columns of the Register, they directing to me at Gainesville, Florida. Yours Truly, T. M. Rickards.

"From Florida," Camp Hawkins near Gainesville, Florida, May 17, 1876.  
To the Register, Kirksville, Missouri.

Dear Register:--We crossed the line between Florida and Georgia a week ago today. We had already driven through one hundred and fifty miles of heavy pine woods and still there was no change. We entered the state at Belleville, in Hamilton County. My report of the country may not be a correct description but it is a true report as I see it.

The country through which our road runs is light sandy soil and heavy pine woods in Hamilton County. The soil, I think is poor, the crops look as if they needed an inch or two of prairie around the stalks and a shower of rain to revive them. The timber is excellent, all pine, pitch and yellow, trunks 60 to 80 feet to the first limb and two feet through, standing so thick that a wagon could not be driven through. We crossed the Suwannee River at its junction with the Withlacoochee, near Ellaville. These two streams are very swift, deep and dark, being stained by pine straw and cypress roots. The Suwannee was choked up with pine logs, being drifted to the saw mills at Ellaville. These mills are the largest in the state, the proprietor, a Yankee, owns a special engine and ships five car loads of lumber every day, using his own train, but there is enough lumber on the yard to keep him shipping for four years to come. We camped our first night in Florida "way down upon the Swanee river, far, far away." (The old folks were not at home.) I threw my line in the river and caught first a gar, then a turtle, and lastly an eel two feet long, he squirmed so much that I give-up fishing in disgust, and told the boys I wouldn't fish where I could catch nothing but snakes.

Leaving Camp Suwannee we passed by a small swamp and near the roadside was an alligator about four feet long, calmly watching the approach of three green Missourians. He had a very open countenance and a smile that was child-like and bland. He died. Newt walked around him and soliloquized. "Well, of all the gol-darned tales I ever read, or saw, or heard, yours beats."

The soil of Suwannee county is an improvement on what we have seen. Land here is divided into several grades. The best is called hammock land, and on this is a heavy growth of Magnolia, Live Oak, white oak, sweet gum, hickory and swamp pine, matted together with vines. The first class pine land comes next and has pine and hickory, with some oak, covering it. Second class pine land is perfectly flat, with a heavy growth of pitch and yellow pine. The third class pine land has a stunted growth of pine and is covered with scrub palmetto and wire grass. Suwannee county, as far as we saw it, has a large proportion of first and second class pine land.

We came through Live Oak, the county seat of Suwannee, and the junction of two railroads. Seems to be a very thriving little place, with some very admirable citizens, some very large, barnlike buildings, a tar factory, and the streets well macadamized with pure white sand six inches deep. The main industry here is in the tar and turpentine interest.

We camped last Saturday evening on the bank of the Santa Fe River, a quarter of a mile above where it sinks into the earth. On



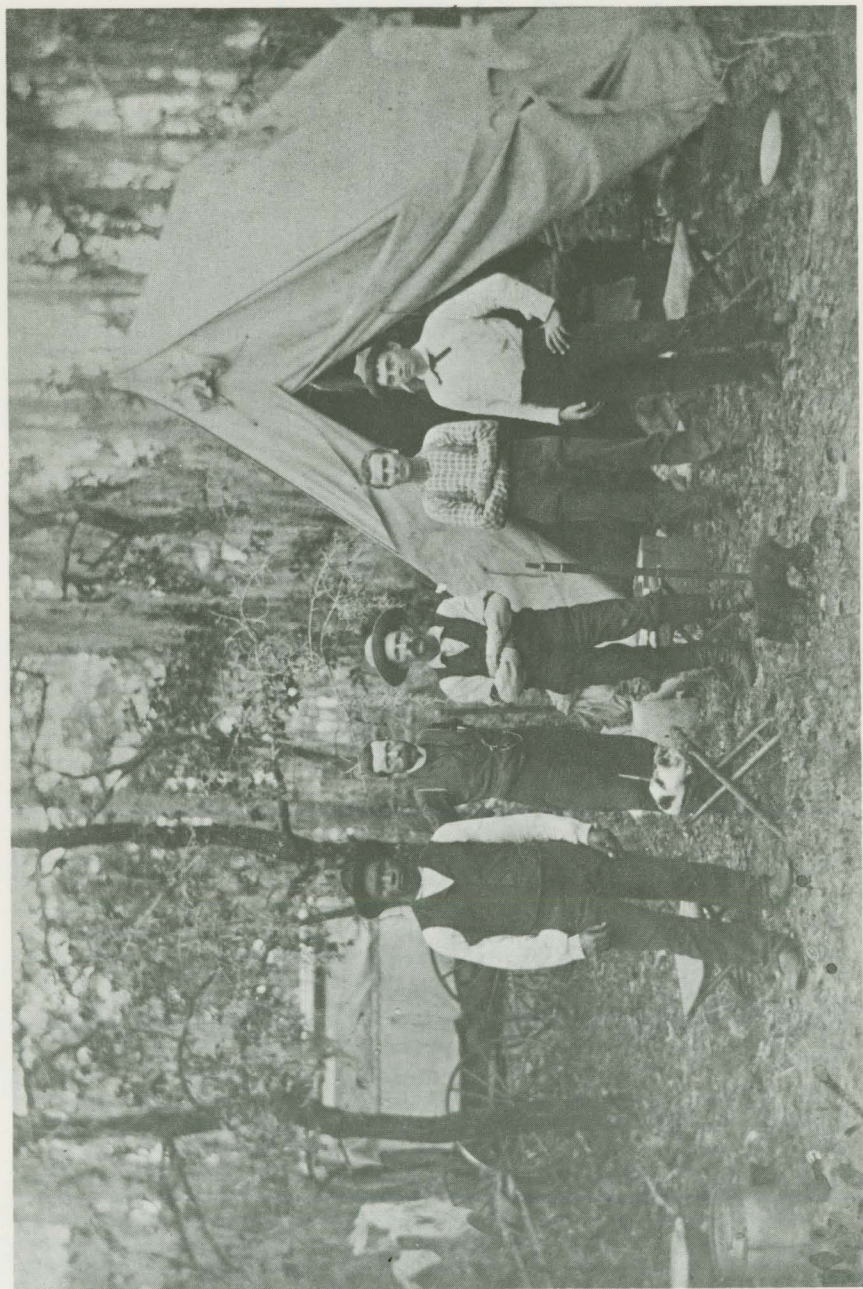
Sunday Newt and I went down to see the natural bridge. The river banks are low, probably twelve feet high above the low water mark. At the point where it disappears the bank merely continues across the river, being no higher or lower, and the river seems to go so far and stops, showing no commotion or fall, excepting when an alligator (and it is full of them) drops off a log and disappears. After running under ground a distance of three miles, the Santa Fe rises, full size and proceeds on its way to the Gulf. We visited Jehatucknee Springs, a few miles from the natural bridge, and were amply repaid for our trip. Here a full grown river rises from no one knows where and flows full size, six miles, into the Santa Fe. Where it rises the spring is about 100 feet in diameter, is very deep, clear and cold, and full of fish, mostly bream. We could see fish full 30 feet from us, the water was so clear. The spring is surrounded with dense hammock, full of game.

Alachua county is better, as far as soil is concerned, than anything we have yet seen. There is more hammock and good pine land and less scrub palmetto. Here the planters raise from fifteen to forty bushels of corn to the acre, 1000 to 1500 pounds of sea island cotton in the seed, 300 bushels of sweet potatoes, sugar cane, rice, oats, rye and peas are staples, oranges, figs, bananas, plums, peaches, blackberries and strawberries all pay well, oranges, plums and blackberries are now ripe and plentiful. Around the low places are a great many whortleberries and the hammocks are full of grapes, though we have found none ripe. Still there is so much sand that we Northerners cannot understand how things grow so profusely. The corn is as high as my head and tasseling out. In Gainesville today I saw watermelons, cabbage, cucumbers, peas, beans and many other vegetables. The cucumbers were not ripe! We camped here on account of our horses. The grass is very fine and water good. The county is full of springs of clear, tolerably cool water. Jim has a good deal of trouble with "Greeley" our near mule. He jumped a fence today into a field and mowed down the young cotton, worth 4 cents a stalk.

Yesterday I visited a sink hole called the "Devil's Hopper." It is six miles from Gainesville, on the Newnanville road. It is a hole in the ground, 100 yards wide at the top, circular, and 100 feet deep. Of course I went to the bottom and looked up. The sides of the cavern are covered with a heavy growth of Magnolia, live oak and white oak, some of them four feet through, and an undergrowth of fern and scrub palmetto four feet high. Ranged around the sides, about half way down are seven springs, rushing down the bank into a deep, clear pool in the bottom. One of these springs is sulphur water, one iron and the others limestone. The pool at the bottom is circular, and about forty feet in diameter. Around the edges of the pool were suck holes leading down deep, to some unknwn place in mother earth. There were large rocks and caves around the bottom, and tracks of animals at the entrance of the caves.

This is an excellent stock [country as] the grass is knee high and never [dies] there being very little cold weather. The cattle are never fed and depend [upon] the hammocks for shelter. I have [seen] more cattle here than I ever saw at [any] other place and they are all fat. [One] man a few miles south of here, has a drove of 60,000 head. The cattle are much smaller than our Missouri cattle. Milk and butter is plentiful but families milk from nine to fifteen cows and have then no more than two or three of our Missouri cows will give.

From the heavy growth of grass and weeds I think the sand is somewhat different from other sand which it resembles. A gentleman told me



A surveying party. T. M. Rickards in the center of the photograph, the young man on the far right is probably his son James. Note the small pig at Mr. Rickards' feet and the unconcerned cat on stool.



today that it would not scour knives or floors, said it would dissolve in water; I suppose he is right, but I know by experience that it tastes like sand and I think it is healthy in batter cakes and gravy! People here don't clear land as we do in the north. They do no grubbing, merely girdling all trees over ten inches in diameter and letting them stand. Some fields have tall, dead pines standing thick and ghostlike as they have stood for thirty years. I saw a field yesterday which was cleared in 1836. It has a crop of corn and cotton growing finely though it has never been manured.

The country is rapidly settling up with people from the north. The crops are so varied, climate so agreeable and healthy, and soil so productive, that hundreds of homesteads are entered every month. Men fresh from Michigan and Illinois, work every month in the year, every day in the month, excepting in July. They quit then, not on account of heat, but rain, this being the rainy season.

The weather would now be warm were it not for a constant ocean breeze, springing up every morning at 8 o'clock and blowing from the coast until four, at 7 p.m. it commences again and the nights are very cool.

I have not yet seen a flea, tick, red bug or sand fly, against all of which I was warned by people who jumped at conclusions. There are a few mosquitoes, but they don't bother at night except in the hammocks and near lakes and streams. I have seen one snake, killed him, a coach whip snake six feet long. The swamps we have seen so far are mere pools of clear water, free from scum, full of cypress-trees and alligators. I suppose there are larger swamps further south. There are thousands of mocking birds; one has chosen a tree fifty feet from our camp and comes there regularly, four times a day and sings. There are a great many bright plumaged birds of large size, generally in the pools and low lands. I have spun this out longer than I intended, but you can shorten it if it occupies too much space. From here we go to Ocala, county seat of Marion. I will write you from there next week.

Yours truly, T. M. Rickards.

*"Letter From Florida, Accidents and Incidents Attending the Survey of the Withlacoochee River," 1880.*

We commence the publication of the accidents and incidents attending the survey of the Withlacoochee River, in Florida, now being made with a view to navigation on that stream, as described by the Surveyor, Mr. T. M. Rickards, in a letter to his brother, William C., of Jeffersonville, which will be concluded in next week's Republican.

Lake Weir, Florida June 27, 1880

I send you in answer to your request, a detailed account of my survey of the Withlacoochee River--not giving results, but only the accidents, mishaps, etc., of the trip. The object of the survey was to find the practicability of navigating the river, cost of opening same for steamboats, etc.

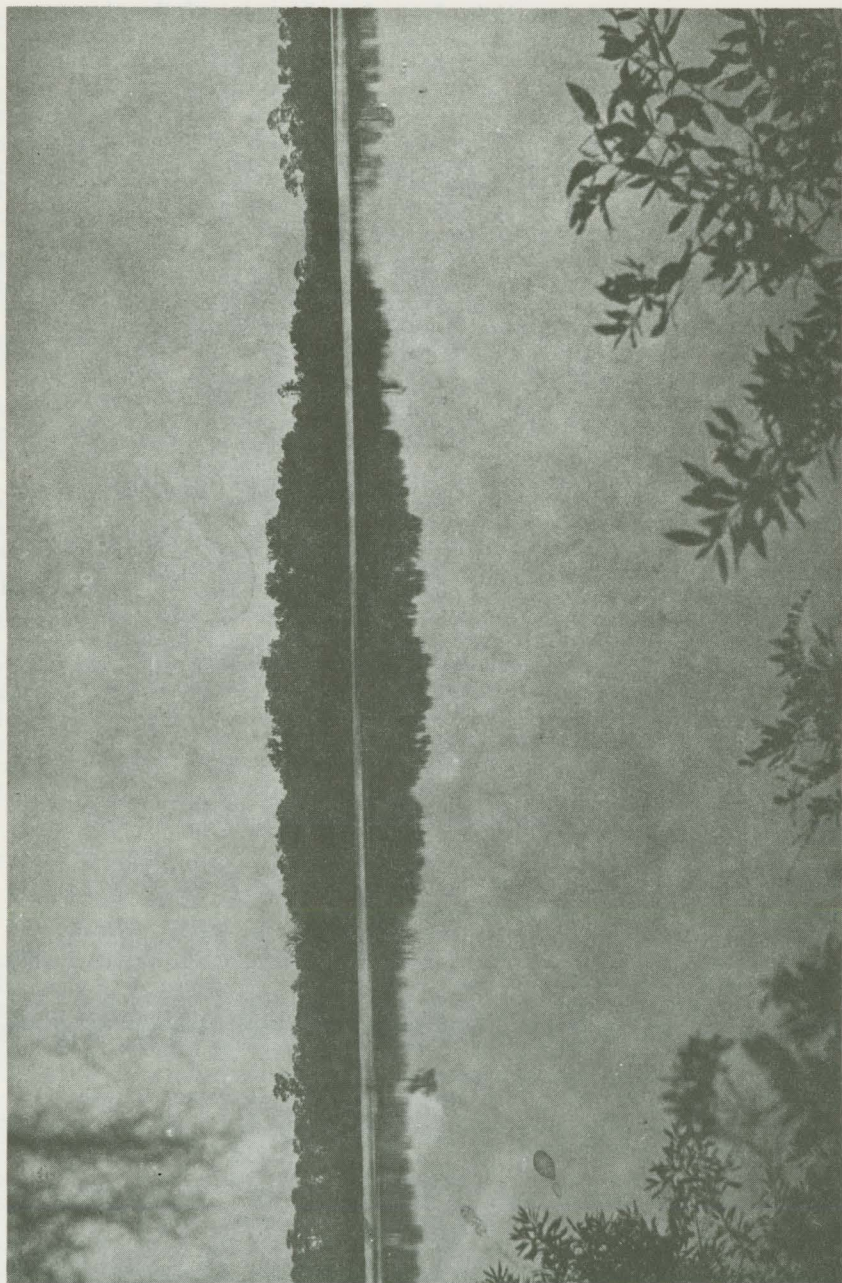
The Withlacoochee River rises among the lakes of Polk County, in South Florida, and is many hundred miles in length--if the crookedness is considered, and forms a county line throughout its whole length; first between Polk and Sumpter counties, afterward with Hernando to the west and south, and Sumpter, Marion and Levy on the east and north. Being comparatively, an unknown region to the civilized world, it came suddenly into excited notice when our project became known.



On the morning of June 13th, Capt. A.N. Edwards, of the steamer Tuskavilla, Oclawaha River; Admiral S. G. Searing, of Federal Point, St. Johns River; and myself, left my place on Lake Weir, with our camp equipment, instruments, guns, etc., one two-horse spring-wagon and one buggy, and drove via Whitesville, Rutland's Ferry, on the lower Withlacoochee. Left my buggy at Mr. Rutland's as we could not cross both vehicles on the little flat at one trip. We crossed the river, from Sumpter county, into what is known as "The Cove," in Hernando, a tract of land lying between Lake Chalo-Apopka, on the south-west, and the river on the north-east; drove two miles down the river, to Shell Mound Orange Grove, our headquarters for the trip, where we arrived about 5 p.m. Here we arranged our plans and equipments, took a good night's sleep in the neat cottage in the grove, and next morning embarked on the "Annie," a beautiful Whitehall boat which the Admiral had forwarded from New York for his use. The members of the party were as follows: Capt. A.N. Edwards, Admiral S.G. Searing, T.M. Rickards, John Carleson and L.A. Sparkman. The duty of the Captain was to guide the boat, not an easy task on this unknown water of many rocks, rapids, logs, etc. The Admiral kept soundings, and my duty was to take bearings and distances of bends, keeping a register of the same, together with depth of water, width of stream, location of channel, etc., with remarks pertinent to subject.

We rowed down stream in a north-west direction for several miles, passing in succession swamps of cypress draped with the long gray moss hanging pendant from the limbs, sometimes 50 or 60 feet in length; wild and improved orange groves, masses of vines, towering oaks, etc., until at 7 miles we arrived at Vincent's Landing. While the Captain and Admiral talked to Mr. Vincent, myself and Carleson made ourselves agreeable to the family, and received an addition to our dinner in the shape of a three-quart pail of fresh milk, but alas for our hopes, the Captain and Admiral on inspection, put every drop under their vests before we reached the boat. Passing two men in a small batteau we ask them: "Do you know this river?" "Yes, for 10 years." "How far to Blue Spring?" "About 20 miles." "How far to the mouth?" "Bout 40 miles." (We found by measurement, it was just 76½ miles.) "Any trouble on account of shoals?" "No, your boat will pass any where." In about 12 miles, as the Annie was making about 5 miles an hour, and the soundings were: Eight feet, five feet, four feet, three and a half --look-out! Three feet, h--l! Two-and-a-half, by golly! Steady! and thump, s-c-r-a-p-e, and the Annie stuck on a rock in the middle of the river, the first we had come to.

Prying off we wondered if this wasn't the shoals we had heard so much of. But soon a roaring, rushing sound of water reached our ears; the current became swifter, and presently in rounding a point, the bare rocks and foamy waters of the first rapids lay before us, with our boat swiftly drifting into danger. Pulling to shore, we examined the rapids; and, after some debate, Sparkman, an old river man suggested that we lighten the boat, by all getting out, save him, taking out valises, guns, etc., so that if the boat upset, the valuables would not be lost, and that he would guide the boat over. We took our stand at the foot of the rapids on the right with our guns, etc., at our feet, to see the "Annie" come, when suddenly the Captain called, "Sparkman!" and ran up the river to where Sparkman was pushing off. "What is it, Captain, any rocks I didn't see?" "No, But before you go-ah, please-ah, hadn't you better hand me that-ah quart flask?" On came the Annie, her bow high and saucy, dancing over the boiling waters with Sparkman in the stern, paddle in hand--Indian style--



Lake Weir. Probably taken from near the Rickards' home in the 1880s.



guiding her carefully around a fallen tree, he steered her bow into the narrow opening and down she came like an arrow over the first rapids. Passing a few more loose rocks, and some shallow places where we could find but 2½ feet of water, we come to Michels' Ferry, on the Acalia and Brooksville road. An old gentleman came down to the flat, of whom we asked: "How far to the mouth of the Withlacoochee?" "About 40 miles by land." "And by water?" "A hundred." "Any shoals?" "Yes, but none to stop that boat." Before we got out of sight of his house we ran into the worst kind of shoals, with rocks scarcely six inches from the surface. We had chosen a time for our survey when the river was at its very lowest stage, and he probably, had not been down lately. Carefully moving down the river, in five miles more we again heard the roar of rapids, and, lightening the boat, Sparkman shot them as before. We reached Camp Edwards at dark, a knoll in a cypress swamp, 35 miles below Shell Mound.

One the morning of the 15th, after stencilling the names of party, date, etc., on the smooth, white bark of a magnolia, we left Camp Edwards, and in five miles entered the mouth of Blue Spring Run. Although the waters of the Withlacoochee are comparatively clear, those of Blue Spring are crystal, very deep, current five miles per hour, and bottom of rock. The water is so perfectly clear that the old sunken logs and rocks seemed immediately at the surface, and often we were startled at the seeming danger, when we really had ten feet of water under us. The "pull" up the run was very laborious. Three miles up the run we encountered our old friend, the rapids, caused partly here, however, by the debris from an old saw-mill, abandoned since the war. Lightening the boat, the Admiral steered and Sparkman waded around via a bayou, and with a bow-line, worked the "Annie" above the falls. The beauty of the bottom of this stream is indiscribable. A perfect aquarium of plants, and fishes of many kinds. Shells seemed bright as silver shining through the limpid stream in the sunlight. Grass and moss, rocks and sand, logs and alligators, were scattered, indiscriminately, over the bottom. Some deep places we could not sound with our measuring-pole, though the bottom was plainly visible. We arrived at the head of the spring at 11:30 a.m., where all hands proceeded into ecstasies over the beauty of water, land and woods; and the Admiral, planting himself on a 30-foot bluff, unconsciously favored us with the following impromptu: "For a summer residence, for Florida people and folks from Savannah, and other Southern places, this will surpass anything in Florida. Yes, or in the United States. I'll bet \$50 to \$1! Good gunning and fishing. That spring of ice water--a hotel here, with piazza there. I've been to resorts, North and West, and never saw the beauty of that water and this hill equalled. High pines behind us; this magnolia hill; that spring--it is incomparable! You never saw anything like it, d--d if you did! Its elegant! Cut your name here if no one ever sees it! Gentlemen, let's bathe! Well sir, I've been all over the North--Cooperstown you know; why man! this comes out all 'round, under the rocks, everywhere."

From the foot of every hill, with scarcely any interruption throughout the whole circle of bluffs surrounding the spring, came innumerable fountains of crystal water--icy cold--all joining in one circular basin about 200 feet wide and from 10 to 25 feet deep. After dinner we proceeded down the run, took up our bearings from the north, seven miles from the head, and on towards the gulf. We

caught several fine trout (black bass) weighing from three to eight pounds each, by means of a troll and "spinner," and Capt. Edwards shot an aligator and an otter. Beautiful bluffs, dense forests of cabbage palmetto, pine openings and swamps, where thousands of the star lilly, and other flowers abounded, were constantly passed until we arrived at Camp Searing on a thirty-foot bluff, at sunset. Next morning a light rain awoke the party, who had nothing between them and the clouds but a mosquito-net. After a pull of half a mile, we came to Darbey's turpentine distillery. A few miles further we passed over more rapids.

The weather had been threatening rain all morning, and after ten miles travel a thunder storm came suddenly up driving us under shelter of the broad leaves of a cabbage palmetto, on the bank. After an hour's rain we again started and kept on our way, though we had several heavy showers on us. The river gradually became broader and deeper, the banks on each side being covered with a dense growth of palmetto, cedar, etc. About 1 p.m. we came to marshes on either side, and our last bearing gave us three cabbage palmettos, for an object, one mile ahead. The river divided into two channels; we took the left and found our object stood on Chambers' Island, and immediately on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. We camped here for dinner, after pulling our boat over the shoals by hand, the tide being out. All hands got out to lighten the boat, the Captain first taking a slight preventive from the quart flask, against a possible shark. About 3 p.m. we started north, in Wacassassee Bay, bound for Dr. Hodge's place, on Hickory Island. The tide had not come in enough to float the Annie, and we were prevented from getting out in deep water by a heavy wind from the Gulf, which, even inside the reef, caused the water to be very rough, though shallow. Poling, pushing and lifting, we moved slowly to our destination.

The Captain wished us to land him on the island until our return, as his two hundred weight out, might save the Annie from a sunken rock, and indeed we often scraped her keel over the oyster beds with a grating noise, which sounded dangerous to us. The Captain tried to shoot a porpoise, several being in sight, playing in the shoals, but they became frightened and ran out to sea. Once we tried to pass to the lee of an island to avoid a heavy sea, and found the channel obstructed by a strip of sand, overgrown with tall grass. As we pulled up, an old aligator moved majestically off the sand, and we lifted the Annie across through the trail he had made, and she once more floated on open sea. The waves ran high, but the Admiral was an accomplished sailor and landed us safely at Hickory Island about 5 p.m.

Dr. Hodge's being six miles out on mainland, the Admiral sent him a note by a boy requesting him to provide a way for us to reach Cedar Keys, as we found it impracticable to go in the Annie. Accordingly his son, Mr. Yulle Hodge, awoke us about 10 o'clock and said he would take us over as soon as the squall then appearing in the west had spent its strength, in the sloop, then moored near the dock. We started at 3 a.m.; the tide having gone out, we got fast on rocks two or three times, but by dint of poling on the part of Capt. Edwards and Carleson, steering by the Admiral, a little swearing by different members of the party, black Josh in the water, and some assistance from the flask, we passed the shoals all right, and after a pleasant sail of two or three hours we arrived at Cedar Keys for breakfast at 8 a.m. Here the Captain concluded to leave us, per



train, for Jacksonville, in order to meet his boat, and after shaking hands, "a smile" (at the Captain's expense), with many regrets at leaving our jolly companion, the rest of the party left the Keys at 10 a.m. The wind shifting in our favor, we quickly arrived at Hickory Island, loaded the Annie and started for the Withlacoochee.

The shoals were literally alive with mullet, the finest salt water fish we have here, which were constantly leaping out of water or skurrying around and keeping the shallow water in a turmoil. Sea fowls, of many kinds, were flying around, clustered on rocks or wading near the beach. Our trip up the river was necessarily slow as we had to sometimes carry our boat over the rocks, sometimes warp with a line along the shore and once force through the swift current of the rapids by rowing and poling. We caught a great many fish going up. Once we attempted to force our way up, the two oarsmen, Carleson and Sparkman with 9-foot oars, Mr. Searing with a paddle and myself at the tiller; we exerted ourselves to the utmost, but could not gain an inch, and the best we could do was to hold the Annie against the current, let her slowly drift down stream, prow up, work her to shore and up out the warp-line. We were three days getting back to Shell Mound, and almost as glad to get there as if it had been home.

June 21st we started from Shell Mound up the river; found it wider than below and studded thickly with cypress islands, and full of floating water lettuce and other aquatic plants. Saw a great many alligators and water fowls of many kinds. Entered Panasofkee Run at 11 a.m. and took dinner at Eichelberger's Hacienda at noon, with the family living there. After dinner we rowed up the run into Lake Panasofkee, a mile from the Hacienda. There is a continuous line of orange groves along each side of this three-mile run; some bearing and some just budding. Mr. Eichelberger's 40-acre grove of "Idlewild," lying on Lake P., a mile northward. The lake is 10 or 12 miles long, north and south, by three in width. We stayed at the Hacienda that night, and all hands did full justice to the excellent supper and breakfast prepared for us by Mrs. Long. At 6:30 next morning we began the exploration of the almost unknown upper Withlacoochee. Here we took in trout after trout (black bass) until our arms ached. Hundreds of alligators, from the little 8-inch youngster to the saurian of 14 feet, were in sight, sometimes 20 at once, swimming across, lying on the banks, or calmly and motionless watching our movements, while we gave them the compliments of the season from our Remington rifles.

The river ran through every variety of swamps, prairie, cypress, and hammock; sometimes a succession of broad lakes, with bayous putting out each way and then narrowing to a deep creek, with heavy cypress on each side, not 20 feet apart. Often we had to stop to cut out water lettuce, move an overhanging limb or a sunken log, when suddenly a broad, beautiful stream, straight for miles, and deep, opened up before us. As we entered it we saw a good frame house to our right and pulled for shore. We found it to be the home of Mr. J.J. Pile, who invited us to stay with him until morning, and as a heavy rain was coming up, we did so. His grove consisted of 3000 wild stumps newly budded, worth three years ago \$32, and now \$10,000.

On the 23d we found the river broad, deep and beautiful for three miles, when we entered a narrow, crooked pass almost choaked with lettuce, then a broad lake, and for eight miles it so continued until we reached Millard's mill, at 11:30 a.m. We ate dinner, and in the afternoon we went up as far as Kay's Ferry, finding no serious

obstruction except at one place, where General Jackson bridged the river during the Seminole war. While here a heavy rain set in and poured steadily down on our devoted heads for two mortal hours. We, tired of waiting for it to cease, and with umbrellas up paddled slowly down the stream, homeward bound. Stayed at Mallard's mill that night, and reached Shell Mound next day at 4 p.m., having traversed twice 132 miles of river, sea and lake, taking copious notes of land and water, stopping at all settlements, fighting our way through bayous clogged with lettuce, rocky rapids, and shallow sandy flats, taking sunshine, dew and rain in swamps, pine woods and orange groves. The health of the party, not the best at starting improved each day as the provisions decreased proportionately, and on Friday, June 25th we parted at Rutland's Ferry, Mr. Searing en route for Acala, myself for home, after planning a continuance of our survey when the rainy season is over.

You asked me to describe the growth of the banana. The main stalk, at maturity is about 15 or 20 feet high, a foot in diameter at the base, and is merely a succession of leaves. Each stalk will throw out from five to eight suckers; these will each bear at 12 months. The fruit bud when it first appears resembles a gigantic ear of corn, and takes four months to ripen. I have an acre of them which have constantly borne and furnished ripe fruit for the last 12 months; some bunches will weigh from 80 to 100 pounds and the stock requires propping, else the wind, aided by the fruit will break it at the ground. The leaves are 6 or 8 feet long and  $2\frac{3}{4}$  broad. The fruit comes out at the top, and on removal the stalk dies and gives room for a younger one. Our bananas will sell here at the price you state they bring with you, limes and lemons also. The oranges are gone, but in the season are worth about a cent each. I plant bananas among my orange trees, putting about 300 to the acre. I have some 500 plants to transplant, but am too busy now to attend to them. They will grow in large clusters if allowed, but do not yield well.

Guavas are a purely tropical fruit, growing on a shrub as large as a lilac bush; the fruit is in size and shape like an orange, but the pulp is soft, like a persimmon; it has a peculiar, musky taste and is eaten raw with sugar, or is made into jelly, marmalade, etc. The shrub is a very ornamental evergreen. I have now oranges, lemons, limes, citrons, guavas, bananas, grapes and pineapples bearing, and if you will come down I think you will conclude that I have been at work since I left Missouri three and a half years ago.

T.M. Rickards



*In The Everglades, A Glimpse of a Part of the State Seldom Seen. On the Bosom of Lake Worth, Miami and Biscayne-Everglades and Indians-Cocoanut Groves, etc.*

*Life Saving Station No. 7 - Biscayne, Fla., Feb. 17, 1892*

Life is too short, I find, to take the time to write each separate friend an account of my trip around the coast, so I economize and write in that way all can receive the same account. My friend, Horace Eagleton, from Weir Park, my son Jim and I left Candler south bound Feb. 2d, stayed at Tavares that night and arrived at Sanford for the breakfast the 3d. Here I received a telegram from a Canton, Mo., friend stating he had started and would meet me at Juno on Lake Worth. I had already written to a seafaring friend, H. L. Burkhardt, of Ft. Lauderdale, to meet me at Juno, he being thoroughly acquainted with the inside waters and adjacent lands, and on account of seven years experience in the United States navy, being also a thorough seaman. We connected at Titusville with steamer and reached Rockledge at night.

This place is intensely interesting and beautiful, with its thick palm growth, coquina soil and good hotels, but I haven't time to describe it. Everybody should go there and see it. Next morning we took passage on steamer San Sebastian for Jupiter. There was quite a list of passengers, the table good, the officers courteous and pleasant, the weather delightful, scenery lovely and the river beautiful. The seven mile trip by rail from Jupiter (where the light house looms majestically over the inlet) to Juno was through what appeared to me a rather barren waste, the monotony hardly broken by the flag stations Mars and Venus, (these latter planets, I can affirm confidently now, notwithstanding the opinion of other eminent astronomers, are not inhabited.) Juno is prettily situated at north end of Lake Worth. I called at the Tropical Sun to pay my respects, was kindly met by the young gentleman in charge but disappointed when I found Mr. Metcalf, the editor, had not returned. We spent a day fishing and shooting on Lake Worth and at the inlet, and next day took passage on the steamer Lake Worth to Palm Beach. Here we found good hotel, beautiful, full bearing cocoanut groves, good boats and good walk across to the ocean beach. Having our camera with us Jim got some good views here including one of a schooner under full sail going south on the Gulf-stream which at this point approaches near the shore. In the evening I got a sail boat and ran to the south end of Lake Worth to Hypoluxo, ate supper and had a midnight sail with a fair wind back. Sunday morning I went to Juno and met my Missouri friend, Mr. Poulton. I had noticed a three masted schooner lying at anchor at the inlet and after hearing a conversation between some of the professional boatmen who have sail boats for tourists' use, in which one asked the other where a third was, and the answer being, "down the lake skinning Yankees," I avoided the "profesh" and secured passage for my party to New River, or rather Ft. Lauderdale, some fifty miles south of the inlet, the schooner "Emily B," Captain John Frow, being en route to Miami and Key West, and waiting for the stiff head wind to shift before getting out to sea. We had a delightful trip all day, got into the rollers once, and while none of us were sea sick, each remembered he had his stomach along. The ship was short of hands but we "land lubbers" took turns. Horace wished often for his gilt laced cap, but not so much as he did for a quarter of an

acre of any kind of land. Wind being unfavorable and a fog setting down on the coast line we beat about until daylight before attempting to land. When the sun came up and the fog lifted we found ourselves in sight of the government House of Refuge No. 9, or Ft. Lauderdale, our destination. Here we ran in as near shore as the shoal would allow and without anchoring slackened sail and came to a stop. Our baggage consisted of camp outfit packed in three trunks, a folding boat in canvas case and our grips. We let the dinghy down and lifted the baggage out of the hold by means of tackle. While letting down a heavy trunk into the stern of the dinghy, the wind caught in the schooner's sails, the tiller ropes caught somehow and the schooner made a mad rush forward dragging the dinghy along in which were Jim and the Captain. One of the sailors sprang to the helm and swung the vessel around head to wind, avoiding a very dangerous capsize. Capt. Dennis O'Neill, a true Irish gentleman, one of the olden time, who is keeper of this station, had his glass on us, and met us waist deep in the surf, hauling us up on the beach high and dry. We turned our camera on the "Emily B," caught her right, and waving goodbye, got our baggage into the house. These government relief houses are fitted up with iron cots and good thick blankets which seemed to have been cut by our patterns, as they fitted exactly. We arranged with Capt. Dennis to do our cooking and we staid with him a week. New River here is alive with fish, tarpon, sharks, snappers and mullet. Burkhardt met us here. My canvas boat consists of folding gunwales, bottom pieces and ribs of wood with steel joints and clasps, and canvas skin and folds up in a four foot package weighing 45 pounds, unfolding into a boat 12 feet long and 45 inch beam, capable of carrying 500 pounds. We put it together here. The vegetation has entirely changed, the timber consisting of sea gum trees, some two feet across the stump, immense banian or rubber trees, palm, mastic and gumbo limbo, with its oily looking snaky bark. We pulled up Middle Run to the "Fiber" plantation where a company is planting out immense quantities of sisal hemp. This plant takes kindly to the soil and indeed there are thickets of wild varieties along the coast. The intention is to manufacture into cordage, &c. We got a heavy wooden boat and went five miles to the Inlet at the mouth of New River. I sat in the bow of the boat with a heavy five pronged spear. We saw the huge bodies of two manatees just ahead of us in the clear water and as the boys pulled quietly near them I threw the spear at one with all my might. The barbs turned back on his thick hide and he made the sand and water boil as he hurried off. Having a tract of land on this river I visited it and found several cocoonut trees on it. I climbed one (having no monkey) and secured several nuts. Several canoe boats of Indians were in sight and one big, strapping fellow came up to the house. I told Jim to get his camera in focus quick while I kept him interested, but soon as it was set up the Indian got nervous and remarking: "Beach, me go," lit out too soon for us to catch him. Mr. Poulton had a photograph of four young lady friends on one card which the Indian liked immensely and when Jim remarked: "him squaws," he smiled broadly. Burkhardt and I walked up the beach twelve miles to the inlet at the mouth of the Hillsboro River. The beach was strewn with wreckage thrown up by waves --timber, barrels, bottles, boxes, and parts of boats and ships. I found several cocoa trees on my land on the Hillsboro, and Burkhardt (who played monkey here) climbed a tree and threw



down twenty-six ripe ones leaving more than one hundred green ones. No boat being here we waited for the tide to go out and then waded across on the bar in three or four feet of water. We saw a great many sharks lying in wait to catch fish in the rushing tide; one I saw I think was from 16 to 20 feet long, but Burkhardt said they were cowardly and he even took after one with a pole he had picked up on the beach and struck him in the side with the end of it, making him plunge away from us. Here is where the mail carrier was killed by them, but he foolishly stripped off to swim across. When one has his clothes and socks on they will not attack but the white skin of a naked person is very tempting to the barracuda, a savage, bold fish which snapped and bit at the poor fellow until the blood ran from him and soon as he was disabled the sharks tore him to pieces.

I suppose what I shall now tell is the first case of the kind on record. We embarked from Ft. Lauderdale on the open sea, outside, Burkhardt taking the trunks and provisions and Horace in a wooden skiff, while Jim and I took our blankets and lunch in the "Fannie." Of course the sea was smooth when we started, but in the evening the wind got up, we could not run near shore on account of the rollers breaking in the shoals, but keeping outside had smooth, deep water. We pulled 22 miles on the Atlantic ocean in a canvas boat to the next government station here at Biscayne. The sea, getting its back up on account of our temerity gave us a little trouble the last three miles, our light boat balancing around like one of the bubbles, and we had a ticklish time landing as we had to depend somewhat on the rollers to bring us in, and they were very careless in the way they did it but Jim hung on to the oars and we got out dry, the Fannie staying on top like an egg shell. Poulton, being unfortunate in having no stomach, walked the beach and cussed.

From here we will make excursions up Arch creek, the Miami River, to Lemon City, Coconut Grove and the lands or keys,

Yours truly, T.M. Rickards

*In January 1879, Rickards' nephew, W. R. Underwood, visited his uncle's Lake Weir farm. The following is from a letter to an Ohio newspaper.*

...[On] the 7th, I started to Lake Weir on foot, leaving my baggage at the hotel [in Gainesville]. Seven miles from town I stopped at a log house and took dinner with the proprietor, a native. He did as much as any man in Adams county could do, GIVE ME HIS BEST--no charge--bill of fare, corn dodger, fried bacon and black coffee. I hired him to bring me here to my uncle's six miles further on, mule back for one dollar. One mile before I reached my destination I came to Smith's Lake, the beginning of a succession of lakes which run to the Southern part of the State. I found my uncle, T. M. Rickards, trimming banana trees; as he had not seen me for several years he did not recognize me. I told him I was from Kentucky, name Johnson, looking for a location; made earnest inquiries about the growth, time of bearing &c, of the banana and orange. He lit out on a general description of the genus musa, giving a scientific description of the mode of cultivation and caught me laughing at him, when he soon identified that I was his little nephew. Uncle Tom has been here two years; emigrated from Missouri with family by wagon. Has a good location on the Ocala

and Lake Weir road. His homestead consists of 125 acres lying on Smith's Lake and surrounding a beautiful clear water lake of twenty-three acres. He has 300 orange trees set out in grove, some of which will bear this year, fifty lemon trees just beginning to bear and bananas by the hundred; one bunch I counted eighty-five bananas on. The fruit grows in clusters of from sixty to one hundred pods to the bunch. South of his place is Bower Lake, two miles wide and connected with Smith's Lake by a ford called "Interlachen." These lakes, large and small, are filled with the finest of fish, black bass.-- They are caught at this season of the year with a "spinner," which is an instrument made of German silver and formed like a minnow, with three hooks attached and fastened to a short line on a long pole.... The fish strike at the "spinner," probably mistaking it for a small fish. These black bass weigh from three to fourteen pounds. Two miles south of here is Lake Weir, said to be the prettiest lake in Florida; five miles wide, nearly circular in shape, clear, sweet, soft water and a white, hard sand beach.... There are a great many deer and turkey here and some bear, panther, wild cats, and other animals. The fox squirrels are large as a good sized cat and of as accidental color, some black, some white and some are spotted black and white. The land is covered with heavy timber of two grand divisions, pine and hammock. The pine land is of three grades--first class, second class and third. The first class consists of a red or mulatto colored soil, full of lime rock and is very productive, timbered with tall pitch and yellow pine trees. Second class, lighter soil, more sandy, and with oaks mingled with the pines. Third class is flat, sour gray soil, scrubby pines and ground covered with scrub palmetto. The hammock land is a heavy, clay soil, immensely productive, growth magnolia, bay, ash, hickory, white oak, orange and palm trees. The magnolia is a magnificent tree, some of them four feet through and one hundred feet high, evergreen large waxy, dark green leaf and large fragrant white bloom. The redbay is a fine close grained wood, suitable for furniture, admitting of high polish and called here "Florida mahogany."... There seems to be a nice settlement around Lake Weir--first on the North side are Missourians, Tennesseans, Georgians, and South Carolinians. On the South and East are people from Indiana, New England and Pennsylvania. All are deeply interested in the raising of orange groves about which there seems to be something so fascinating that when a man once begins he never quits, like gambling or chewing tobacco.... There is a postoffice, school house and church on the North side and two stores and a post-office on the South. The land immediately on the lake is nearly all settled, but back from them a short distance there is still government land which can be bought at \$1.25 per acre or entered by homestead.... The houses here are very ordinary, generally log with stick chimneys. One would be surprised to enter some of them, as I saw two very fine looking pianos in log houses. The lake people all seem to be well educated and are very hospitable, kind and sociable.



The following burial list is taken from the original handwritten record in the archives of the Boca Raton Historical Society. The first twenty-five burials were in the original cemetery. Most of these were reinterred in the second cemetery near what is now Glades Road and Northwest Second Avenue. Numbers twenty-six to sixty-seven were buried in the second cemetery and then all were reinterred in the final cemetery on Sunset Hill. The list ends in 1948 when the Town of Boca Raton took over the management of the Cemetery association.

1. Cochran Baby  
Died November 24, 1916. Age 1 1/2 years.  
Buried partly in road. To be moved.
2. Martha F. Carroll, wife of James M. Carroll.  
Died February 13, 1917. Age 37.
3. Martha E., wife of William H. Sistrunk.  
Died Mary 21, 1917. Age 51.
4. Frank Baron. Born Quebec September 22, 1855.  
Died at Deerfield November 12, 1917. Aged 62.  
(Taken to Ft. Lauderdale)
5. Elizabeth Baron (née Routledge) wife of Frank Baron. Born  
Liverpool, England, April 11, 1864. Died Deerfield  
November 14, 1917. Aged 53.  
(Taken to Ft. Lauderdale)
6. Mr. E. Woodard  
Died about November 17, 1917.  
Age about 52.
7. Arthur Brenk, Son of J. A. Brenk.  
Died November 24, 1917. 12 yrs.
8. Clara Lee Douglas.  
Died May 17, 1918. Age 1.  
Daughter of Lucas Douglas.
9. Mrs. Rosa Gaskin, wife of W. S. Gaskin.  
Died Deerfield May 20, 1918.
10. Captain James Lynch, Age 66.  
Died at Deerfield, June 20, 1918.
11. John Edward Rogers, Age 10.  
Died at Deerfield, July 4, 1918.
12. Harold Rogers, Age 8.  
Died at Deerfield, July 5, 1918
13. Baby Purdom  
Born Boca Raton November 29, 1918,  
Died December 5, 1918.
14. Charles Carroll. Age 79  
Died at Yamato Aug. 31, 1919
15. Sarah Ann Smith. Age 72  
Died at Yamato Jan. 28, 1920
16. Martha Ann Carroll. Age 70.  
Died at Yamato July 11, 1920.
17. Frederick Akins. Aged 3 1/2 years  
Died at Boca Raton Dec. 20, 1920
18. William S. Townsend. Age 79 years  
Died at Boca Raton Jan. 22, 1923

19. Elizabeth Douglas, wife of Lucas Douglas died at Boca Raton September 15, 1923. Age 31 years.
20. Infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. G. Nichols. Died at Deerfield Nov. 11, 1923.
21. Child of Wm. G. and R. V. Nichols. Nov. 2, 1924.
22. Arthur Allen Brenk. Son of Wm. Brenk. Aged 7 days. Died July 17, 1926.
23. Nancy Ellen Brenk. Daughter of Will Brenk. Died July 16, 1927. Age 2 days.
24. James M. Carroll. Died Aug. 12, 1927. Aged 54.
25. Infant child of Orvis and Nellie Gaskin Died Nov. 22, 1927.

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26. Lorraine Cramer, daughter of J. F. Cramer, Buried March 20, 1928. Aged 25 years.
27. William Cleveland Arnau, son of Julian K. Arnau, died and buried Apr. 22, 1928. Infant. (Moved to Deerfield) 6-16-42
28. Jeannette Chesebro, wife of F. H. Cresebro Born Dec. 3, 1854, Died Apr. 27, 1938, Aged 73 yrs, 4 mos. 24 days. Buried Apr. 29, 1928
29. Billy Brenk son of Wm. and Louise Brenk. Died Sept. 8, 1928 aged 5 days
30. Ida Ruth Gaskin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Gaskin, died and buried Feb. 22d, 1929. Aged 10 mos. 23 days.
31. George Ashley Long died Feb. 24th 1929, buried Feb. 26th. Aged 74 yrs., 8 mos., 5 days.
32. Nicholas Champia died March 16, 1929; buried March 18th. Aged 19 yrs.
33. Infant child of Mr. and Mrs. John L. LaMont Died March 29th, 1929.
34. Infant child of Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Smiley Died July 12th, 1929.
35. A. L. Hague died Jan. 25, 1930 at Deerfield, buried Jan. 26th. Aged 51 yrs.
36. C. J. Rawlerson Jr. died Sept. 8, 1930 at Arcadia, Fla., buried Sept. 9 in Boca Raton Aged 12 yrs., 4 mos., 15 days.
37. William W. Oglesby died Nov. 22, 1931 at Deerfield, buried Nov. 26th. Age 60 yrs. (Moved to Deerfield) D. H. Fairchild (Undertaker), Ft. Lauderdale 6-16-42
38. Mrs. Abbie L. Pope, died Aug. 6, 1932 at Boca Raton, Fla. buried Aug. 8. Age nearly 86 yrs.
39. Arnold's baby buried Sept. 3, 1932
40. Smith baby, buried May 3, 1933
41. James Ward Campbell born Dec. 24th 1862 in Province of Quebec, Canada. died Nov. 28, 1933 at Lake Harbor, Fla. and buried Nov. 28, 1933. 70 yrs. 11 mo. 24 days.
42. Loretta Anderson--age 85 yrs. born Dec. 3, 1849 (1851) died Oct. 11, 1934 and buried Oct. 13th 1934
43. Orson R. Arnold, Age 35 yrs. died Nov. 3, 1934 at W. Palm Beach, Fla. and buried Nov. 5, 1934.



44. Frank Howard Chesebro, born Dec. 10, 1850 in Albany Co., N.Y.,  
died Jan. 19, 1936 in Boca Raton, Fla. Age 85 yrs. 1 mo.  
9 days. Buried Jan. 21, 1936.
45. Mrs. Eliza A. Townsend -- 64 yrs. died in Miami Feb. 7, 1936.  
buried Feb. 10th.
46. Bert Allision Combs -- Age 65 -- died at Deerfield July 13,  
1936. buried 16th July. Undertaker D. H. Fairchild,  
Ft. Lauderdale. (Moved to Ft. Lauderdale)
47. Eliza A. Savage, born at Bombay, Texas Jan. 26, 1859, died  
Mar. 17th 1937. Buried Mar. 19th.
48. Bedford Forest Moseley, Age 71, died at Brevard, N.C. July 7,  
1937, buried July 9th.
49. Clarence Boyce, Age 51 yrs, died Feb. 11, 1938, buried  
Feb. 13th.
50. Ernest Wetherington, Age 2 months. died Mar. 27, 1938  
buried Mar. 28th. (Welton Smith's nephew)
51. Swan E. Stenander, Age 45 yrs. 11 mos. 17 days,  
died June 8th 1938, buried June 11th.
52. Earle Moore, Age 52  
died July 14, 1938  
buried July 17th
53. Harrell's baby died July 19, 1938,  
buried July 20th.
54. George S. Akins -- Age  
died Aug. 17, 1938, buried Aug. 19th.
55. Marion Cox -- Age 10 yrs.  
died Aug. 30, 1938 and buried Sept. 2d.
56. Mrs. Hester Stenander -- Age 49 yrs., died July 31, 1939;  
buried Aug. 2, 1939.
57. George A. Long Jr. -- Age 46 yrs.  
died November 6th, 1939; buried Nov. 8th.
58. Charles Oscar Journigan -- Age 23 yrs. 4 mos. 20 days.  
Died Nov. 11, 1939; buried Nov. 12th.
59. Mrs. Eva Grace Tate -- Age 66 yrs. 11 mos. 15 days.  
Died Dec. 19, 1939; buried Dec. 21st.
60. Charles William Stokes -- born Dec. 13, 1855 at Concord, N.H.;  
died Jan. 4th, 1940; buried Jan. 6th.
61. Amy M. Fiske -- Age 60 yrs.  
Died May 2, 1940; buried May 4th.
62. Henry Nelson Colvin, Age 5 mos.  
died July 20, 1940, buried July 21.
63. Francis Elmon Evarts.  
born July 27, 1852 in Kent Co., Mich.  
died March 18, 1941 at W. Palm Beach, Fla.,  
buried March 19th.
64. Ira Henry Davis, Age 77 yrs. 1 mos. 12 days.  
Died Oct. 20, 1941. Buried Oct. 22d.
65. Alice Adeline Akins. Age 53 yrs. 3 mos. 19 days.  
Died Dec. 24, 1941. Buried Dec. 26th.
66. Infant Brenk (female)  
Died and buried May 4, 1942.
67. Jewell Purdom MacWilliams. Age 41 yrs.  
Died May 10, 1942. Buried May 12th.  
(Grave N. of baby's grave)

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68. James Fiske -- Age 60 yrs.  
Died Oct. 11, 1942, buried Oct. 15th.
69. Infant child of Lt. and Mrs. Reginald S. Davis. Age 21 hrs.  
Died Oct. 30, 1942, buried Oct. 31st.
70. Nancy Moseley, Age 72 yrs.  
Died at Boynton, Fla. Dec. 1st, 1942, Buried Dec. 2d.
71. James Boyce, Age 12 yrs.  
Died at Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Sept. 20, 1943  
Buried Sept. 24th.
72. Harry Hughs Bee Jr., Age 4 mos. Baby of Geraldine Cox Bee.  
Died at Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Oct. 23, 1943.  
Buried Oct. 28th.
73. Charles W. Brown, Age 69.  
Died Feb. 4, 1944. Buried 2-6-44.
74. Infant Sellers (Paul Sellers)  
Died Feb. 18, 1944. Buried 2-18-44
75. Mrs. Ellen Stokes, born Dec. 23, 1858.  
Died Nov. 3, 1944, Buried 11-5-44.
76. Phillip Hardy Sellers, Age 70 yrs.  
Died April 30, 1946. Buried 5-2-46.
77. Mrs. Vertie Davis, Age 79 yrs.  
Died Aug. 3, 1947, Buried ?
78. Mrs. Marie Kristine Andelfinger  
Died Sept. 2, 1947. Buried 9-6-47. Age 42
79. John George Wittschen. Age 61 yrs.  
Died April 8, 1948. Buried 4-12-48.
80. Mrs. Reba Peery Ball. Age 75 yrs.  
Died Aug. 15, 1948. Buried 8-22-48
81. Mrs. Elvira Combs. Age 81 yrs.  
Died Aug. 22, 1948. Buried ?
82. William Copeland Cox. Age 57.  
Died Oct. 23, 1948. Buried ?

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"Affidavit" by Harry M. Chesebro. Removal of bodies from the first to the second cemetery.

I, Harry M. Chesebro of Boca Raton, in the County of Palm Beach and State of Florida, being duly sworn, deposes and states, that,

Frank H. Chesebro, my father, donated the lands named in the caption hereof for cemetery purposes in the year 1916 and had active charge thereof until the year 1928, at which time the Boca Raton Cemetery Association was chartered by the State and that the said Frank H. Chesebro was then elected President of said association and acted continuously as such until his death January 19, 1936.

Deponent further states, that during the year 1936 I succeeded Frank H. Chesebro as President of said association, and have continued to act as such to the present time.

Deponent further states that, the said records show that a total of 25 bodies were interned on the said lands, and further show that, on May 22, 1928, 24 bodies were exhumed and removed to be buried elsewhere, and that, on May 23, 1928, the last and remaining body was removed from said lands.

Deponent further states that, he personally assisted in the work of removing said bodies and knows that all of the bodies ever interned on the said lands were removed therefrom and reinterred elsewhere, during the two days cited above.

Deponent further states, that the removal and reinternment of all of said bodies was done under State Permit by an authorized undertaker, one Mr. Karnatz, then of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and that the certificates of removal, required by law, were properly executed and are a part of the Cemetery Association's records, and are now in the possession of Miss Audrey Purdom, Secretary to said Boca Raton Cemetery Association.

(Signed: Harry M. Chesebro)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 15th day of March A.D. 1944 at Boca Raton, Florida.

(J. C. Mitchell  
Notary Public)

\* \* \* \* \*



WILLIAM E. SUBANK	W. Q. BROOKS	HERMAN A. SKRABAL
WILLIAM T. WARE	ROY BROOKS	JOHN E. WILL
ROBE S. EDWARDS	ORO W. DEEN	JOHN MITCHELL
ARTHUR S. CLEMENT	JERRY E. TURNER	BERNARD TURNER
GERALD E. WARE	L. C. HARRELL	SYDNEY H. POOL II
JOHN M. ANDEFINGER	CARL CARLSON	FRANKLIN THOMAS
ORO. E. DEVO	FITZLUIG BOWNER	THOMAS NOSSUM
KENNETH H. EDWARDS	GUY D. BENDER	
HERBERT BROWN	OEO. BENDER	
CARL DOUGLAS	F. VINTON LONG	
FRANK BRAUN	CHAS. HARRELL	
A. WILLIAM DEVO	JOSEPH ANDEFINGER	
HILLMAN CARVER	LAWRENCE PALMER	
A. LINCOLN DEEN	DESSEALI DEEN	
ALBERT DEEN	DOROTHY W. BOWLES	
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PAUL SELLERS	RALPH H. BOYCE	
VERNON RICHMOND	WILLIAM P. HARRELL	
FRANK E. JACKSON	CHAS. L. COLVIN	
JOHN LARSON	ROY H. ROSEKE	
CHARLES COX	ROBT. J. JOHNEGAN	
KLINE PLATT	WILLIAM C. BRENK	

\* \* \* \* \*

From Frank Chesebro's Diary (Boca Raton Historical Society).

September 4, 1925: "Finished Cemetery"

January 22, 1926: "Two loads plants. Out west with Ballard to see new cemetery site"

February 9, 1928: "Mr. Geist talked about moving cemetery"

February 10, 1928: "Went with Mr. Geist to see cemetery location N. W. of Pear! City."

February 15, 1928: "Mr. Geist here about cemetery."

February 19, 1928: All to Longs in P.M. for cemetery Trustees to sign deed to Geist."

March 5, 1928: "Took Gedney the cemetery charter."

March 6, 1928: "Denegan and a gang of men began grubbing new cemetery."

April 9, 1928: "Met Mr. Geist at Harry's and talked over cemetery job."



May 21, 1928: "Up to cemetery and picked out some lots for the long dead in old cemetery."

March 20, 1929: "At cemetery Harry and Browns setting out Australian Pines."

March 11, 1930: "Annual cemetery meeting in P.M. Esther, Purdom, Hattie Deigo, and Harry here."

March 10, 1931: "Annual Cemetery meeting."

\* \* \* \* \*

*Deed, transferring land for second cemetery. Mr. Gedney was an attorney and an agent of Clarence H. Geist.*

THIS INDENTURE, Made this 23rd day of April, A.D. 1928, between Jerone D. Gedney and Madeleine P. Gedney, his wife, of the City, County and State of New York, hereinafter referred to as the Grantor, and the Boca Raton Cemetery Association, hereinafter referred to as the Grantee:

WITNESSETH: That the Grantor, for and in consideration of the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) and other good and valuable considerations to him in hand paid by the Grantee, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, has granted, bargained and sold to the said Grantee the following described land, situate, lying and being in the County of Palm Beach, State of Florida, known and designated as:

Northwest Quarter of Northeast Quarter of  
Northeast Quarter (NW $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$ ), Section  
Nineteen (19), Township Forty-seven (47)  
South, Range Forty-three (43) East, Palm  
Beach County, State of Florida.

This indenture is made subject to the following reservations, restrictions, covenants and conditions, which the Grantee accepts as a part of the consideration thereof and which shall run with the land for the benefit of the Grantor and be binding upon the Grantee, its successors and assigns.

Neither the Grantee, nor its successors, shall sell, convey, or lease said premises, or any interest therein, or any portion thereof, by deed, lease or otherwise, without the consent in writing of Spanish River Land Company, or its successors or assigns.

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, the same, together with the hereditaments and appurtenances, unto said Grantee.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The said Grantor has hereunto set his hand and seal the day and year first above written.

(SIGNED)

To the People of Boca Raton and Deerfield:

The Trustees of Boca Raton Cemetery have adopted the following rules and regulations:

No lots will be sold but a charge of \$5.00 will be made for each burial. This is done to provide a fund for the improvement, beautifying and maintenance of the cemetery and to avoid having the grounds disfigured by neglected and uncared for lots and graves.

We intend to make a beautiful little park of the place and to care for it as long as we have friends there. The land has been deeded to us and can never be used for any other purpose. Everyone can have their choice of location for a grave or family group providing it does not interfere with our general plan. Relatives can erect headstones and plant flowers as they choose. An accurate record of all graves will be kept. The Superintendent and Trustees get no pay for their services--only for actual labor performed.

(Helen Long.

TRUSTEES (Viola Purdom.

Esther M. Chesebro.

\* \* \* \* \*

*From Harry M. Chesebro Obituary, The Boca Raton News, March 13, 1959.*

[In 1916 one acre was set aside near the Boca Raton Hotel] as a Cemetery.] When C. H. Giest purchased the land he wanted the one acre and traded ten acres near the waterworks for a cemetery. During World War II, the government took over the 10 acres and deeded another 10 acres on the ridge where the present Boca Raton Memorial Cemetery is situated. Mr. Chesebro was head of the Cemetery Association and instigated the idea of having [a] memorial monument there, designed and built it.

Mr. Chesebro formed the inscription on the monument. The inscription reads: "A memorial dedicated to the memory of those buried here who served in the military forces of our country in all its wars. At the rising of the sun and at eventide we will remember them and dedicate ourselves to the cause of peace for which they served and sacrificed.

Mr. Chesebro was a retired farmer and a noted horticulturist and nurseryman. He was noted for his giant hybrid amaryllis.

\* \* \* \* \*



*To the Boca Raton Town Council, August 17, 1949:*

Gentlemen:

We, the undersigned members of the Boca Raton Cemetery Association do hereby make request of the Town Council as follows:

As you know, we do not have funds to maintain the grounds at the cemetery, therefore, we are asking that the Town maintenance crew be allowed one day a week, or at least one day every two weeks, to keep the grounds free of unsightly growth and work with us for the beautification of this project.

We feel that the cemetery is one place that should be considered by the Town at large as a civic project.

Any consideration that you can give us toward the improvement of our cemetery will be appreciated.

Respectfully yours,

BOCA RATON CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

*The Town Council answered on September 15, 1949:*

Gentlemen:

Your letter of August 17th was presented to the Council at its regular meeting, September 13th, for their consideration.

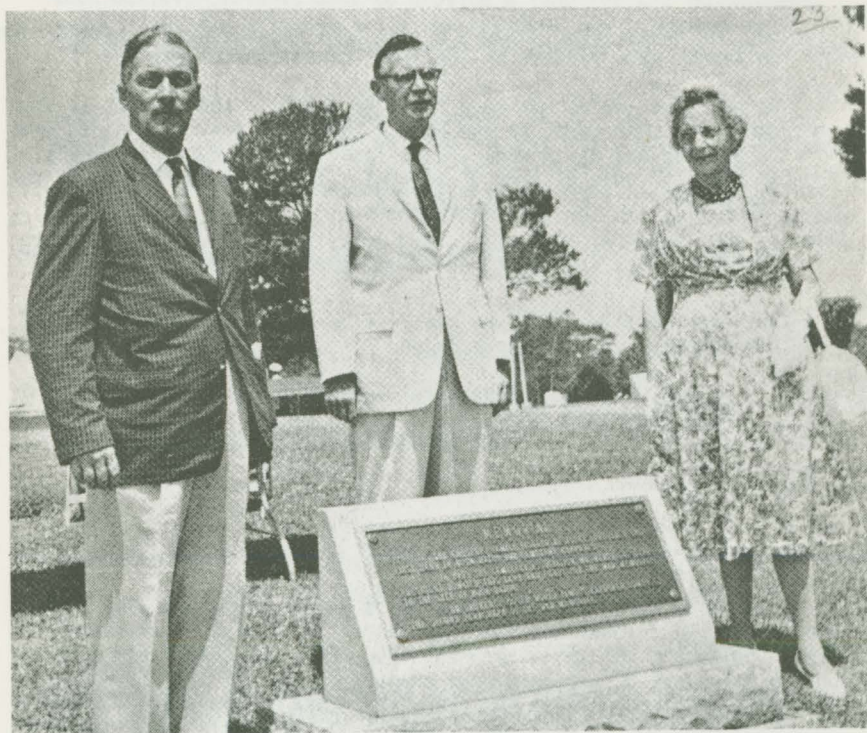
This is to inform you that by motion of the Council the Superintendent of Public Works has been instructed to devote two or more days per month in the maintenance and beautification of this property, as requested in your letter.

I trust that this fulfills the wishes of your Association in this matter.

Very truly yours,

Wm. H. Lamb, Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*



The dedication of the Chesebro monument May 10, 1962. Left to right: Col. Arnold MacSpadden, Dr. William G. O'Donnell, and Mrs. Harry Chesebro. "The ceremony dedicated the memorial marker to the Chesebro family who gave the land for Boca Raton's first cemetery. Also to Dr. Lawrence Gould, world famous explorer who composed the second paragraph on the War Memorial monument. Col. MacSpadden spoke about the Chesebro family and told of the history of the cemetery. Dr. O'Donnell is a member of the Cemetery Association which presented the marker." *Boca Raton News*, May 17, 1962.



*Script for dedication of Chesebro marker, 10:30AM, Thursday, May 10, 1962 at the Cemetery.*

Henry Warren: The purpose of this occasion is to dedicate a memorial marker to the Chesebro Family of Boca Raton whose name is identified with the giving of the first land for Cemetery purposes in the City of Boca Raton - and more particularly to Harry Chesebro who designed and administered the construction of the War Memorial in 1953. At this time the Cemetery was given over to the City for their operation. Incidentally the City has continued to make the Cemetery a beautiful Park under the capable hands of our Sexton, also Fire Chief, assisted by the Cemetery Committee consisting of Helen Mann, Dorothy Eubank, Dr. O'Donnell, Helen Roadman, and Audrey Purdom. To review some of the early days of the Chesebro Family in Florida I will turn the program over to Arnold MacSpadden who has had considerable contact with the Chesebros along with a look at some very revealing writings of Frank Chesebro from the early days - MacSpadden.

Col. Arnold MacSpadden: The patriarch Frank Chesebro and his family arrived in Boca Raton in 1903 - but only after Frank had made an earlier trip the same year by a small boat down the intra-coastal waterway from Titusville to Miami and return - examining the land as he went to determine where he was going to settle. Frank Chesebro was an inveterate diary writer and as he was making the trip he would write a few lines every day. Some of the remarks about the numerous landings he made along the way were not too complimentary of the area - such as his reference to the sand flies and mosquitoes around Stuart and Jupiter - he stated that they were so thick he couldn't stand them - I know you just can't get away from them no matter how hard you try. When he reached Boynton he said, "It is a stinking hole in a muck swamp." His first landing at Boca Raton he said, "They are even trying to grow Citrus in the White Sand." He talked at some length with Tom Rickards who was living here then and had land to sell. However, he went on to Miami - got some supplies and returned back up the Canal bound for Titusville. When he reached Boca Raton he made a profound statement in his diary, "It looks better this time." He had made his decision. He wrote his wife that night thirteen pages as I remember the entry and in this letter he must have asked his wife to send him some money - for he picked it up in the mail when he got back up to Titusville. After completing his trip - selling his boat and getting his clothes mended, he boarded a train and returned to Boca Raton - Bought sixty acres for \$12.50 per acre less five per cent for cash. He lost no time building a house after stumping the plot. After closing in the house he returned to South Haven in Michigan for the Summer to prepare for the move to the South - which in those days was more of a chore than it is today. Frank Chesebro upon his return to Boca Raton with his family lost no time getting a garden and fruit trees and from all accounts was never sorry that he moved to his choice of all the East Coast of Florida. As the years went by he was moved to give the Town a plot of ground for a Cemetery, which according to Audrey Purdom was in or near the present Cloister Patio of the Club [The Boca Raton Hotel and Club]. When the Boom came to

Boca Raton and Addison Mizner bought up all the land for the Cloister Inn the Cemetery had to be moved to what is now about 15th Street and Northwest Second Avenue. There the Cemetery grew in size until it held sixty-five bodies - then along came the Corps of Engineers to build the Boca Raton Army Air Corps Base and it became necessary to move the cemetery once again to it's present location. Harry Chesebro with loving hands helped move the bodies and administered the move as the president of the cemetery association. It seems every Town has its Frank and Harry Chesebro in spirit but I believe Boca Raton is indeed fortunate to have had such dedicated workers with the ability to envision good works for the City we live in. I will now turn the dedication back to Henry Warren who will have Mrs. Harry Chesebro escorted to the marker for its unveiling.

Henry Warren: Requests the Mayor of the City, Jack Brandt, to escort Mrs. Harry Chesebro to unveil the Marker.

While unveiling the marker Warren remarks: "We assembled, witness the unveiling of the Memorial Marker dedicated to a Pioneer family of Boca Raton who has done so much toward commemorating those who have passed on and thereby preserved the history of our Town and its people.

Henry Warren: Then asks Mayor Brandt to formally accept the marker for the people of Boca Raton.

Henry Warren: Then dismisses the meeting by thanking all those who have had a part in the dedication.





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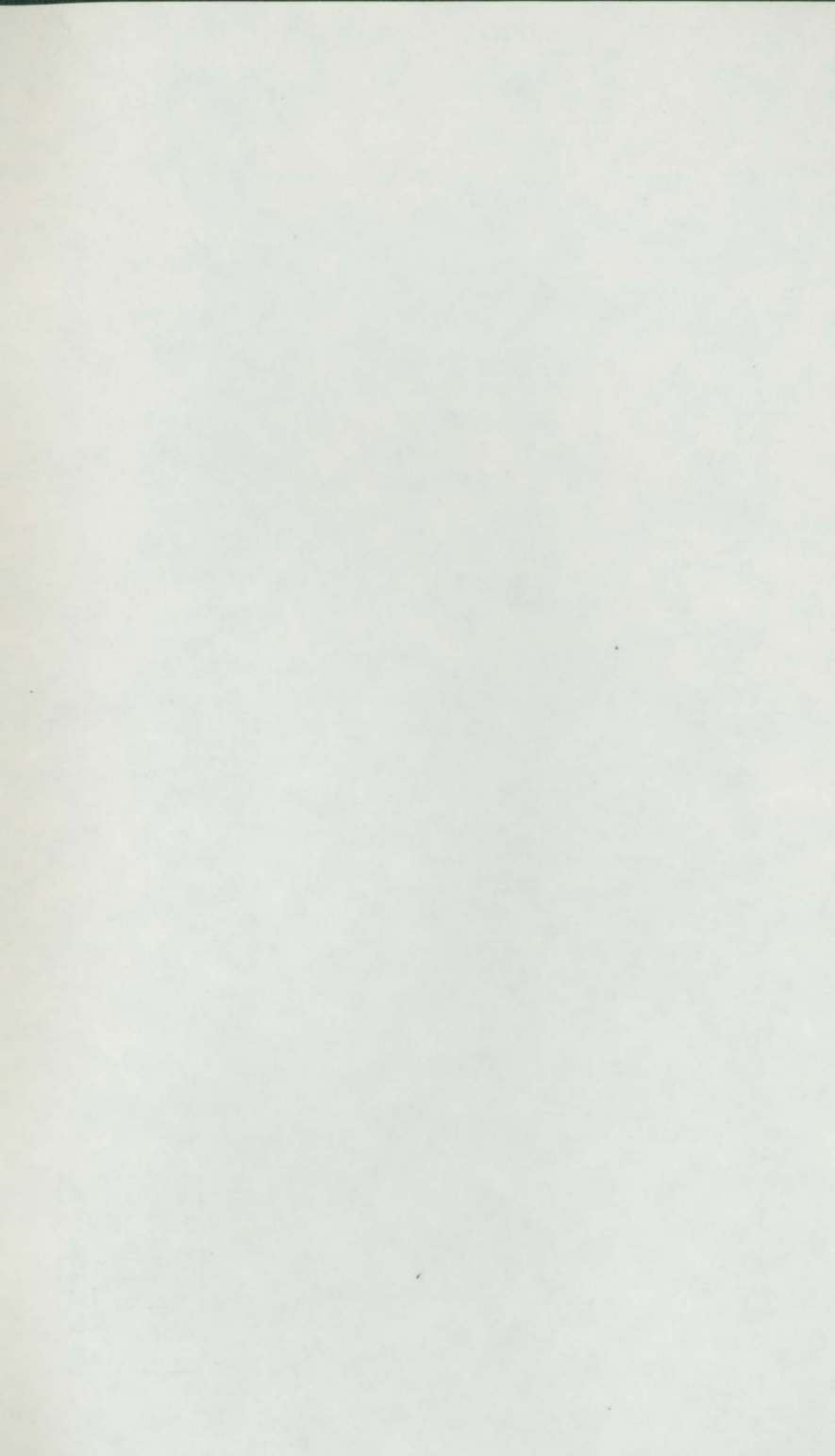
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