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***Key West: Cigar City, U.S.A* by L. Glenn Westfall**

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St. Augustine traveled the civil rights path kicking and screaming and with its (white) heels dug in. Why was the town's response worse than that of some other cities of the South? Colburn describes a maddening, widening, infernal circle of people and agencies who fought or impeded civil justice in St. Augustine: the local mayor and white politicians; the local police; the local white clergy; local business leaders (the chapter on them is skimpy but damning); local judges; Florida's governors during the period; the F.B.I. (who bugged King's rooms and supplied local agitators with S.C.L.C. strategy). Colburn clearly shows the most culpable group to have been St. Augustine's white leadership, the "best people," whose shameful insensitivity, rancor, and intransigence permitted violent whites from inside and outside the community to control white responses for too long.

Colburn presents the S.C.L.C. as a pragmatic, opportunistic, and ultimately morally right, if not always morally commendable, organization whose necessary intrusion into St. Augustine escalated the conflict. Inevitably, perhaps, they had to leave—abandon is perhaps too strong a term—local black activists to fight a war of attrition once the symbolic value of St. Augustine in achieving nationwide objectives had been exhausted. Martin Luther King, Jr. is viewed essentially as is the S.C.L.C.: brave and idealistic, but anxious to extricate himself once trench warfare remained to be fought. Judge Bryan J. Simpson, the federal judge for the Middle District of Florida emerges as the book's surprising hero. He consistently forced segregationists to obey the laws that were finally being imposed to curb racial bigotry and brutality.

The reform achieved in St. Augustine—which Colburn insists is only partial and still resisted—was made possible by tenacious local activists aided at critical junctures by organized, outside forces and finally supported by a lone, but strong judge who insisted that the law of the land be obeyed. This is a precarious model for change. Martin Luther King, Jr. said of St. Augustine that "some communities, like this one, had to bear the cross" (210). He did not say for how long. Professor Colburn's book suggests that it is still true that those who deny the carriers of the cross in our time, are ordinary people.

Jack B. Moore

Key West: Cigar City, U.S.A. By L. Glenn Westfall. Key West, Florida, 1984. The Historic Key West Preservation Board. Pp. 72. Notes, Bibliography, Illustrations. \$11.95.

Key West today subsists mainly on winter tourists and the durable renown of Ernest Hemingway. There are few visible traces of its once mighty cigar industry, or of the passionate endeavors of thousands of cigarmaker/revolutionists living there during the war for Cuban independence. Glenn Westfall's book, which is aimed at a popular audience, helps recover this important part of Key West's history and thus, will make tourists more aware of a past they might have overlooked. Published by the local historic preservation board, it represents a most welcome addition to the T-shirts and plastic flamingos marketed to visitors in this unique Florida city.

The text and photos focus on the period between 1868 (the beginning of the Ten Years War in Cuba) and the 1930s when Key West's cigar industry finally collapsed. The book begins with two short chapters describing the early development of Cuba's cigar industry and the political



forces that inspired the establishment of an emigre colony on Key West. The remaining five chapters proceed chronologically to detail the growth and demise of Key West's cigar industry.

Only ninety miles separate Cuba from the Keys, a distance that is politically important but climatically trivial. Both places have the same subtropical conditions valued in the production of fine handmade cigars. In the late 19th century political unrest and burdensome tariffs prompted cigar manufacturers in Cuba to develop factories inside U.S. borders, initially on Key West. The large colony that resulted became a major base of operations for exiled independence supporters, whose ranks included both owners and workers in this vital Cuban industry.

Patriotic solidarity temporarily defused prior conflicts over wages and working conditions in the Key West factories. When the war ended, workers resurrected their demands, and owners were still loathe to yield. Although the cigar industry was booming, prosperity was thwarted by a string of costly strikes and lockouts. There were other problems. Key West's location was convenient to Cuba but remote from U.S. markets, and especially vulnerable to hurricanes. Ybor City and West Tampa were better situated and grew rapidly at Key West's expense. During the 1920s, demand for handmade cigars plummeted with the introduction of cheaper machine-made cigars and the growing popularity of cigarettes. These problems greatly worsened during the depression of the '30s, which dealt the clear Havana cigar industry a disastrous blow from which there would be no recovery. Key West was fortunately blessed with beaches, a balmy climate, and a legacy of interesting architecture. The place survived pretty well, but the cigarmakers and their descendants have been scattered in all directions. Books such as this one help ensure that they won't be entirely forgotten.

Susan Greenbaum