Tampa Bay History 08/01

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FROM THE EDITORS

After a brief (and successful) attempt to reach a wider audience with a special double issue devoted to the centennial of Ybor City, *Tampa Bay History* returns to its usual format. This issue includes a variety of topics related to the history of the fifteen-county area served by the University of South Florida. The periods covered range from the 1820s to 1920, and the setting varies from fragile frontier outposts of the first white settlers to the fun-filled baseball diamonds of the boys of summer.

The lead article by Ellen Babb and Milly St. Julien won first prize in the 1984 *Tampa Bay History* Essay Contest. Drawing on newspaper accounts and census reports, their study examines the private and public lives of women in St. Petersburg at the turn of the century. As the authors demonstrate, the story of these particular women reflected the situation of American women generally at the time.

Two other articles portray conditions in south Florida during the nineteenth century. J. Allison DeFoor’s study of Odet Philippe separates fact from fiction in the life of this French immigrant who became legendary. A feature article from an 1897 newspaper is reprinted as a document providing a glimpse of Fort Myers and Lee County in that year.

Twenty years later south Florida had developed to the point where the only pioneers were tourists. In an effort to attract them and their money to Tampa, the city sponsored spring training for professional baseball teams. In "The Chicago Cubs Come to Tampa," James W. Covington describes the 1913 experiences of the first team to train in Tampa. A scant four years later, war preoccupied America, and Robert A. Taylor’s photographic essay shows the impact of World War I on the people of south Florida.

The winners of the 1985 *Tampa Bay History* Essay Contest were Eirlys Barker, whose article "'A Sneaky, Cowardly Enemy': Tampa’s Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1887-88," won first prize, and Frank Alduino, who earned second prize for his article, "Prohibition in Tampa." Both articles will appear in forthcoming issues. Information on the 1986 Essay Contest can be found on page 88.
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIVES:
WOMEN IN ST. PETERSBURG AT THE TURN
OF THE CENTURY

by Ellen Babb and Milly St. Julien

An American woman living at the turn of the century was frequently depicted as a portrait of a middle-class housewife and mother, frozen at the doorstep of her home. Her place was the familial domicile where she posed as the loving, supportive companion to her more worldly husband and as the nurturing, educating mother responsible for the proper upbringing of her offspring. The “lady of leisure” rarely worked outside the home, but devoted herself to domestic duties, including the imparting of essential values of discipline, hard work, and sobriety to her children. This training was necessary for the successful integration of these future citizens into the free enterprise system. The inference that these women, isolated within their private domains, were passive participants in the economic process who sat on the sidelines of community affairs, veils us from a more accurate and three dimensional view of these women of the late Victorian age.

Women of all ages and economic groups exhibited a wide range of lifestyles and socio-economic activity. Some women chose career and public recognition over marriage and motherhood. Often, married women, dedicated to the cherished ideal of domesticity, consciously limited family size and worked within family businesses and their homes to bring in additional income. Widows, single women, and married women from the lower classes worked of necessity to meet their basic needs.

Many women sought to enlarge their sphere of influence beyond the home. In both rural and urban areas, these women involved themselves with church and civic activities in an effort to improve the quality of life within the community. Some campaigned vigorously for the eradication of all forms of social ills; local branches of national women's organizations were formed to deal with such timely issues as temperance, education and reform politics.

Clearly, a diversity of characteristics identified the turn of the century woman, and no one stroke of the brush can accurately represent, as a still life, the experiences of women of this era. An examination of the history of St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1900, by reviewing general patterns and individual deviations, illustrates the dichotomy between the common perception and the realistic interpretation of the role of women at this time. Who were the women who came to live in what was then a rather isolated outpost at the end of the Orange Belt Railway? Where did they come from and how did they live? And how closely did they measure up to the Victorian ideal?

While the majority of its female residents listed Florida or other areas of the South as their place of birth in 1900, St. Petersburg with a total population of 1,575 contained a sizeable number of women who were either foreign-born or transplanted Northerners. Many winter visitors, attracted by the mild climate and excellent business opportunities, remained and became
Advertising of the late Victorian age inaccurately portrayed women as physically weak, their only strength being in their roles as housewives and mothers.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.
ents. A Wisconsin native, Mrs. Annie Wood and her husband, Frank A. Wood, visited St. Petersburg a number of times before finally moving there from Michigan in 1904. Mrs. Wood was a member of the Woman’s Town Improvement Association—a local woman’s organization dedicated to town beautification—and several other civic organizations. Her husband, a prosperous local entrepreneur, was elected one of Pinellas County’s first commissioners, and he served one term in the state legislature. Many non-natives lived in, or traveled to, a number of places before they finally settled in St. Petersburg. Annie Ghastly, a forty-five-year-old white woman, is a case in point. Born in Connecticut, she married, at the age of twenty-six, a bookkeeper from Missouri. Eugene and Annie Ghastly traveled extensively during the first ten years of their marriage. By 1900, they had a seventeen-year-old son who had been born in Colorado, a fifteen-year-old daughter born in California, and a nine-year-old daughter born in Georgia. Annie bore five children altogether, three of whom were living at home when the 1900 census taker came to her home in St. Petersburg.

The mobility of the established population is no less remarkable. The social column in the weekly newspaper was peppered with accounts of residents who vacationed out of state, often for extended periods of time. Many were young women like Miss Mary Shellenberger who spent
five months in 1901 visiting friends in Des Moines.⁴ The ease with which many individuals changed residence seems to reflect a rather comfortable economic status. A number of visiting women came to St. Petersburg unescorted by husbands or chaperons. Mrs. S. H. Sturtevant of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, spent the winter of 1901 with Mrs. C. M. Williams. Mrs. Sturtevant was a writer on the staff of the Oshkosh *Northwestern*, and she sent numerous articles to that newspaper extolling St. Petersburg’s fine climate, its excellent educational system and the dedication of St. Petersburg’s women to town beautification.⁵ Francis Debuhl, a twenty-seven-year-old Canadian woman, came to St. Petersburg in 1900 as a visitor and boarded with Marge and Charles Davis on 5th Avenue. Neither her young child nor her husband accompanied Mrs. Debuhl. Although local hotels catered to the majority of St. Petersburg’s visitors and winter residents, forty-three homes afforded temporary residence to boarders such as Mrs. Debuhl.⁶

Boardinghouses similar to the one run by Mr. and Mrs. Davis might be expected in a growing town. In addition, though the majority of women lived with spouses and children, there were significant deviations from this nuclear household pattern. Emilou Rowland, thirty-six, and Marry Fisher, forty-eight, were the married daughters of Colonel John C. Williams. The sisters

The home of Colonel and Susan Livingston, on 6th Avenue, represented the affluent lifestyle of some of St. Petersburg’s early residents. The Colonel was a citrus farmer and realtor from Tennessee. Susan, an Illinois native, was a homemaker and mother of six.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.
lived with their daughters in Emilou’s rented home. Neither husband was listed as an occupant of the household at the time the census was taken. In 1900, Marry built four new residences within the town limits. She apparently had money for her investments, suggesting that her husband lived elsewhere and relied on his wife to make sound business deals in his absence and to check out financial opportunity in the area. Eight families lived in an extended family network. Nellie Halbert, a twenty-eight-year-old Wisconsin native, lived with her husband, Curtis, on a farm they owned located on 8th Avenue. Curtis and Nellie shared lodging with Nellie’s mother, nephew and niece, all from Missouri.

Married women accounted for 65 percent of women over the age of fifteen in St. Petersburg in 1900, a relatively low proportion compared to the national average of about 90 percent. Most of these women had married between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. But this was not always the case. If the census data are accurate, Althea, a native of Michigan, married her husband when she was ten years old and he was twenty-two. Dizy Wishard married in 1890; her young husband was only twelve years old on their wedding day. No record of divorce can be traced through the census, but there were separated couples living in St. Petersburg in 1900. Hatta Hodges, twenty-six, married when she was sixteen and bore three children. When the census was taken, she was living with a twenty-nine-year-old single carpenter by the name of Charles Bell. Her husband, Tyler Hodges, lived next door with their children, a nurse and his mother. Marry Lloyd, twenty-four, found herself in a similar situation. Marry lived with Matilda and Mike

Involvement in “state societies” allowed women to maintain ties with their native states.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.
Andres; her husband of six years lived one door down with their year-old son. It is interesting that in both of these cases the children were left in their father’s care.¹¹

Most married women bore three or fewer children, though these statistics may be deceiving. While ninety women listed four or more children in their household, eighty-five married women had no children at all. The latter figure seems rather high and may be explained by the fact that some of these women had only been married a short time. Others may have been married before, and may have only listed children from their present marriage.¹² Low fertility or birth control may also have been a factor. Sixty-one married or widowed women claimed no children born after more than three years of marriage; of these, thirty-two had no children after twenty years of marriage.¹³

There was no question of low fertility for one young couple. The St. Petersburg newspaper boasted of triplets—two boys and a girl—born to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Strauss in October, 1901. Good-naturedly calling the births an “epidemic,” the St. Petersburg Times noted that, “Joe always was a record breaker at everything he went at.”¹⁴ Not all women would have been financially or emotionally equipped to care for such a triple blessing. Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Branch,

Numerous boardinghouses provided accommodations for winter visitors and for new residents.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.
who had no children of their own, found an abandoned newborn on their doorstep late one night. They kept the child, but sadly, it died only one week later.\textsuperscript{15}

Generally, married women did not work outside the home. Only five married women listed an occupation in the 1900 census. These figures do not give an accurate picture, however, of many women’s contribution to their family’s income. It is known that forty-three women had boarders in their home, and one can safely assume that the bulk of cleaning and cooking for these tenants was chiefly the wife’s responsibility.\textsuperscript{16} In addition, there were women who helped their husbands in a family-owned business or in managing a farm. For eleven years, Catora Holshouser co-managed Holshouser’s Drugstore with her husband William. William’s brother and a young drug clerk from Missouri also boarded in the Holshouser’s 6th Avenue home.\textsuperscript{17} Most husbands were employed as small shopkeepers and merchants or in some aspect of the construction business, and it seems that they were prosperous enough to support their wives.

Many widows and single women did work to support themselves. There are several striking cases of widowed women who conducted all forms of financial transactions. A forty-nine-year-old widowed mother of three, Belle T. Miller, lived in her sister Edith’s home. Edith was married, but no mention was made of a husband living in her residence. Both women did have their sons living with them. Late in 1901, Mrs. Miller purchased Ted Welton’s residence on 8th Street. In the same period of time, she also bought forty acres of land just northwest of St. Petersburg from the U. S. Improvement Company. Immediately after this last purchase, Mrs. Miller sold ten acres to her son, Max Miller. The newspaper reported that buildings would be erected on all three parcels of land.\textsuperscript{18} Mary Finney, a widowed woman of German descent, supplemented her income with rental money from her properties—a two-story house on 5th Avenue and two five-room cottages on 3rd Street.\textsuperscript{19} Single women, too, purchased property in their own name. Miss Ellen Davis had a home built in 1901. She lived with her sister Corinetta and her eighty-year-old father, John.\textsuperscript{20}

To finance such purchases and to bide time before marriage, single women worked as teachers, dressmakers, cooks and domestics. Miss Lillian Thomas was an ambitious young career woman. In September, 1901, Miss Thomas moved to St. Petersburg from Bartow with her mother and family. At that time, she was a sales representative for the Atlanta Journal, and she traveled all over the state securing subscriptions. Three months later, the St. Petersburg Times announced that Miss Thomas had moved to Charleston and that she was doing public relations work there for the Southern Interstate and West Indies Exposition.\textsuperscript{21} The two female physicians in St. Petersburg were also single women. Mary Davis, one of the physicians, was a fifty-eight-year-old Pennsylvania native who also took boarders into her home on 5th Avenue. In 1900, she had two female and two male tenants—one of whom was Postmaster Roy Hanna. The other physician was a thirty-year-old Swedish immigrant by the name of Alvilda Armeson, who lived with forty-year-old Florence Goldie, an artist from New York. They lived on the outskirts of town on Miss Goldie’s farm, along with a forty-year-old black male servant.\textsuperscript{22}

Five single women and one married woman were employed as teachers in 1900, making teaching the most popular vocation among St. Petersburg women. Most frequently women worked while single and retired after marriage, but Miss Maud Chase was an exception. She began her teaching career in 1895 when she was appointed assistant to the principal in the first
graded school. She quit teaching from 1897-1898, and married Grant Aiken in 1899. The following year she returned to teaching. Also in 1900, Grant, a postal clerk, served on the town council as clerk and collector. In 1920, Maud Aiken became owner and principal of the Aiken Open-air School. Mrs. Aiken came from a family of ambitious young women. Her sisters, Beulah and Lena Chase, were employed in the millinery and remnant business for a number of years before they became partners in B & L Chase Enterprise. Eventually, the business emerged as the Willson-Chase Company and became a very successful local department store.23

Each year a state-supported summer school was held for the advanced training of teachers. During 1901, the summer “Normal” was held in St. Petersburg. The school was in session from June to August and attracted educators from all over the state of Florida.24 The St. Petersburg Summer Normal marked “the first time in the educational history of the state [that] a course in manual training [was] offered in a completely equipped modern up to date manual training school.”25 Classes were held in the school C. E. Tomlinson had built on a lot adjacent to the graded school. There, relatively new courses in military science, physical education, industrial
During the regular school term, arts and domestic science were taught to young men and women. During the summer, Normal instructors were versed in methods of teaching the new curriculum. Also in 1901, the state legislature appropriated funds for a two-year teachers training school to be established in St. Petersburg. Classes were held in the public high school, and the combined venture was known as the St. Petersburg Normal and Industrial School. A generous resident donated funds which paid for a young women’s dormitory that was set up in the Park Hotel. Miss Annie Allen was selected as the matron of the hall.\(^\text{26}\)

Miss Rowena Longmire, a resident of Bartow, taught methods in reading, grammar, history, and drawing at the summer Normal. Long admired as one of the leading teachers in the state, Miss Longmire was scheduled to complete postgraduate work in Nashville in 1902.\(^\text{27}\) Qualifications for teaching were cloaked in maternal rhetoric at the turn of the century. A student of Miss Longmire’s extolled her motherly virtues in a letter to the \textit{St. Petersburg Times}. “All teachers can not possess her intellect and loveliness, but all may cultivate her gentleness and sweetness and sincerity—her perfect womanliness,” the student remarked. “Let us remember that
the mother holds the key of the soul, and it is she who stamps the coin of character and that next to mothers, teachers influence the destiny of nations.”

Training at the state Normal prepared women for local teaching positions. Miss Susie Bozeman, for example, was put in charge of twenty students at the new Lellman Station School less than one month after she attended the summer Normal.

The summer Normal was segregated; fifty-four teachers enrolled in the white Normal and twenty enrolled in the colored Normal. But the advent of Jim Crow in St. Petersburg was a relatively new development. One early resident recalled that black and white children had attended school together in the 1890s and that no one thought twice about the arrangement.

Local historians do not mention the existence of a separate school for black children before the year 1914, when the Glenoak School was built. But in September, 1901, the St. Petersburg Times reported that Colored High Graded School No. 10 opened with an initial enrollment of seventy-eight pupils. It seems that as the town settled and the population grew, segregation became a more important issue to town residents.
In 1900, blacks and whites still lived in close proximity to one another. One racially mixed couple, Maggie and John Dekli, lived on the outskirts of town. Their neighbors included immigrant families, sailors and single black men. Maggie was a twenty-three-year-old black woman from North Carolina. Her husband John, also from North Carolina, was a twenty-six-year-old white laborer. The young couple had no children after six years of marriage. Another interracial household was that of Emma Sanders, a widowed white woman who ran a boarding house. She lived there with her daughter and four black boarders—a husband and wife, and two young men employed as laborers. Interestingly, the two single men, Berrell and Sam Sanders, bore Emma’s last name. It could be that Emma was the widow of a black man, and the two men were his relatives.\(^{32}\)

The marriage and living patterns of black married women reflected the established pattern of other married women in St. Petersburg. Generally, the women and their husbands listed the South as their birthplace. Most women lived in nuclear families, married between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, and bore three or fewer children. Again, the majority of black women did not work outside the home. Those that did work were employed as domestics, although a woman from Georgia listed her occupation as “fisherman.” Deviations from the general pattern among whites are seen mostly in husbands’ occupations and in the literacy rates of women. Most black men were employed as laborers, rather than as small businessmen and merchants. And more black women than white women were listed as illiterate.\(^{33}\) Most black women could read, but many could not write. The St. Petersburg Times reported little on black life or on the participation of black women in civic and social affairs, but it is probable that black women had influence within the black community itself.

Foreign-born white women were allotted a much wider role in shaping the community at large. Most of these women also lived in nuclear families, married in their mid-twenties, had three or fewer children and listed no occupation other than that of housewife. These women came mostly from Canada, England or Western Europe, and their husbands were usually of American or English descent. Often, husbands were naturalized while their wives were not. When piecing together census data, it appears that some foreign-born men came to the United States and then returned home to marry. Frederick Ramm came to the United States in 1869. In 1878, he seems to have returned to Germany where he married Ida Ramm. All three Ramm children were born in Germany; Ida and the children did not join Frederick in the United States until 1892.\(^{34}\)

Women from Canada and England were most easily integrated into the civic life of St. Petersburg. One such woman, Sarah Armistead, eventually married a mayor of St. Petersburg. Sarah was born and educated in Canada. As a young woman of fifteen, she married John Judge in 1862. Fourteen years later, she found herself the widowed mother of two young boys. At the age of thirty-five, she married John C. Williams, thirty years her senior. They moved to St. Petersburg from Detroit in 1887. Sarah Williams was apparently a shrewd business woman, since she and Henry Sweetapple, treasurer of the railroad, were instrumental in bringing the Orange Belt Railway to St. Petersburg. It was this important link that brought settlers to St. Petersburg, fostered business development and insured the growth of the town from a frontier outpost to an emerging city. After Williams’ death in 1892, Sarah married Captain James Armistead of Virginia, who was himself a widower. It was her third husband, Captain Armistead, who was mayor of St. Petersburg in 1900. Sarah was very active in civic and community affairs.
She and her husband opened Armistead’s Opera House, which became the center of local cultural activity in the early 1900s. She helped to establish the local Congregational Church, and she was an active member of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, the Woman’s Town Improvement Association and the Order of the Eastern Star. When Sarah Armistead died in 1917, her body was returned to Detroit, and she was buried next to her second husband, Colonel John C. Williams.

Many women in St. Petersburg were as involved in civic and church affairs as Sarah Armistead. There were eight Protestant churches in St. Petersburg in 1901, and most had active women’s organizations. Four churches had Ladies’ Aid Societies or Women’s Guilds. Members of these churches helped raise money for the support of their churches. Ladies at the Congregational and Methodist-Episcopal churches held ice cream suppers and candy pulls, and they sold handmade items at Christmas bazaars. The Ladies’ Aid Society of the First Presbyterian Church held similar fundraising events, and in 1899 these women donated $300 towards the purchase of a lot for a new church at 3rd Street and 4th Avenue. The Ladies’ Guild of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church actively sponsored a number of dime, ice cream and pink socials in 1901. Mrs. Jacob Baum, a Canadian native, was a member of St. Peter’s Church. Her husband
donated the land for the first Episcopal church built within town limits. After her husband’s death in 1894, Mrs. Baum built and managed a twenty-two room boarding house where she accommodated winter visitors. She was treasurer and secretary of the Park Improvement Association for many years. The Baum’s daughter, Grace, had the distinction of being the first baby born within the town limits.36

The Congregational and Presbyterian churches shared facilities until 1903. The arrangement satisfied both groups: the Congregationalists needed a pastor, and the Presbyterians needed a building in which to hold services. While they shared quarters, the Presbyterian and Congregational women held joint meetings of their Women’s Home Missionary Society. The organization raised money for home and foreign missions and for Christian social service projects within St. Petersburg. The Christian Endeavor Society of the Congregational Church provided religious training for the young men and women of the church. In September, 1901, members of the Christian Endeavor Society met for charades at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. Norwood.37 Interestingly, in 1924, Karl Grismer claimed that the Norwoods were members of the Christian Science Church.38

The Christian Science Society came to St. Petersburg in 1900, the same year as the first Church of Christ, Scientist was chartered locally.39 Caroline Raynard, a sixty-six-year-old widowed woman from New York, listed her occupation in the 1900 Census as “Christian Scientist.” She was probably the church’s sole practitioner-teacher, and she may have come from the North to establish the church in St. Petersburg.40

The Congregational, Methodist-Episcopal, Baptist and Episcopal churches each had a female delegate serving as a vice president of the local Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). At the turn of the century, the national WCTU was a politically active instrument for social reform. By 1900, the organization had extended its original temperance goals and expressed concern over such timely issues as drug abuse, prison reform and the growing need for young women to educate themselves. It can not be determined from available sources if the WCTU had a chapter in St. Petersburg before 1900, but by 1901 the organization met regularly and had a weekly column in the St. Petersburg Times.41

St. Petersburg had the perfect political climate for such an organization to take root and flourish. In the first town election in 1892, Anti-Saloon party members defeated Open-Saloon members by a vote of more than two to one. Although they had no voting power at the time, housewives and mothers probably wielded great influence in prompting their husbands and sons to cast votes against the Open-Saloon League.42 The WCTU held regular meetings on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Meetings were most often held at the home of a Mrs. Gough. Women of all ages were welcome, although it is unclear whether or not black women could be members. Mothers no doubt influenced daughters’ reformist aspirations. Mrs. Nora May was president of the local WCTU in 1901; that same year her daughter Pearl was involved with the Loyal Temperance Legion. Women met bi-monthly to discuss such topics as purity in art and literature, curfews for teenagers, and the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse. Occasional rallies and flower missions were held by the women at local churches.43
The weekly WCTU column in the *St. Petersburg Times* preceded each article with the quote, “To cure is the voice of the past; to prevent the divine whisper of today.”44 Women were reminded that the ideal mother should combine virtue, stoicism, and endurance with gentility and intelligence to produce a generation of children that would grow up to become upstanding and responsible citizens in the community.45 Local women contributed regularly to the WCTU column. One such social housekeeper, Miss Bellona Havens, had been a matron at Kansas State Prison before she moved to St. Petersburg. She enlightened local readers with stories of her experiences as a prison matron, and defended the right of young offenders to a fair trial and the “protection of mother love.”46

The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union was not only concerned with the eradication of all forms of social-ills; it was also an active feminist organization whose members banded together as much for sisterhood and social companionship as for other moral reasons. In August, 1901, the editor of the weekly WCTU column transferred the blame for original sin from Eve to Adam and added that women were “sick to death of the disposition to always lay a man’s mishaps at the door of the female sex.”47 This was a rather radical statement, given the influence of the numerous local churches.
The Loyal Temperance Legion (LTL) was a youthful affiliate of the St. Petersburg Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Regular activities held at the Congregational Church centered around moral essays and readings given by the young men and women who comprised the club’s membership. They also co-sponsored the flower missions and public rallies given by the WCTU at the Congregational Church. Contributions in 1901 included a donation for ice for the public drinking fountain in the city park, funded by a community social given by the LTL that July.48

In June of 1901, the WCTU and the LTL pooled their time and energy and jointly arranged for the opening of a reading room over Arthur Norwood’s Clothing and Dry Goods store. The reading room was “well equipped with books, magazines and all kinds of parlor games.”49 The women hoped to draw young people off the streets at night and improve their minds at the same time. Mrs. J. McPherson, whose family established the area’s first newspaper, the Seabreeze, was instrumental in the organization of the reading room. Unfortunately, patronage waned after only a few months, and the project was scrapped. In 1905, interest in a reading room was rekindled, and a library was established in the schoolhouse under the auspices of the St. Petersburg Reading Room and Library Association.50 Miss Maud Edwards served as vice president of the LTL in 1901, until her death later that year of unknown causes at the age of fourteen. Ironically, five years before Maud was born, her family had moved to Florida from New England because of her mother’s poor health. The move was more propitious for Maud’s father, George Edwards, who was elected Mayor in 1903.51

Through membership in such organizations as the WCTU, the LTL and the Woman’s Town Improvement Association (WTIA), women were afforded temporary respite from the monotony of daily housework and given an opportunity to make a real difference in their community. The WTIA was perhaps the most industrious of the young town’s civic organizations. It was an outgrowth of the earlier Park Improvement Association, whose members were largely responsible for beautification efforts in what is now Williams Park. The Park Association was responsible for the erection of wooden sidewalks and a bandshell in the city park, as well as for the fence that kept hogs and cows from wandering through and grazing in the park.

When the WTIA was founded in May, 1901, its twenty-eight members, some of whom were only winter residents, broadened their goals from park to citywide improvements, in an effort to “civilize” the often “primitive conditions” found in early St. Petersburg. Bi-monthly meetings were most commonly held at the Detroit Hotel. Less frequently, members met at the home of Mrs. A. P. Weller, the organization’s first president, or at the public school’s Normal Hall.52 A native of New Jersey, Mrs. Weller had moved to St. Petersburg with her husband and children in 1897. Her husband, Albert, managed the St. Petersburg electric light plant owned by Jacob Disston and Albert’s cousin, F. A. Davis. Mr. and Mrs. Weller were both active in civic affairs; Mr. Weller served on both the town council and the school board in 1901. In 1907, the Wellers’ daughter Ida married Horace Williams, grandson of Colonel John C. Williams, one of St. Petersburg’s founding fathers.53

Mrs. Weller was a driving force in the fledgling organization. She organized meetings, sold tickets for various fund raising events and pulled together the loose ends for much of the work done in the city park. Within the WTIA, a Park Commission was established to oversee development plans for that land parcel. In August, 1901, the women approved plans for
preserving the existing pine and oak trees in the park, and they supported recommendations for furnishing new settees. Two months later, members agreed to “have the diagonal walks in the city park surveyed and curbed; also the walk to the bandstand and also the circular walk for the some-time fountain in the middle of the park. It was decided to have the ground prepared for the St. Luce grass and the grass planted.” At subsequent meetings, members discussed painting the park benches, the cost of laying water pipes and ideas for paving the park sidewalks with oyster shells.

The WTIA sponsored “Arbor Day in the Park” in November, 1901. Town residents were asked to donate trees and shrubbery to be planted in the park. A generous local man, who preferred anonymity, donated 5,000 rosebushes to the park project. The women had only to pay for the packing and transportation of the bushes. Although the WTIA members gladly accepted all donations and offers of help, the women had to rely on more than generosity to fund some of their more ambitious projects, and so they devised a number of money-making ventures that first year. On July 4, 1901, the WTIA held an ice cream and cake social for town residents in the storeroom which Mr. F. A. Woods had lent them for the occasion. The following month, the women planned a day-long steamboat excursion open to the public for fifty cents, and residents were enthusiastic in showing support for the activity. Miss A. A. Michael, a local school teacher

Before the erection of fences, animals roamed local beaches.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.
and secretary of the WTIA, made the arrangements for the outing. In addition, Miss Michael was a stockholder in the Mid-Winter Fair Association. 57

Perhaps the most profitable and well-attended undertaking of the year was the WTIA sponsored Alkarhest Lyceum Course. The idea for the entertainment/lecture series was first raised in September, 1901, and by October 5, the lecture schedule had been approved and one hundred and two individuals had purchased season tickets. Community support for the program was never a problem for the ladies; the major difficulty in getting the series off the ground seemed to involve transportation problems in getting speakers to this rather isolated town. The eight program series was scheduled to open on October 12 with Ralph Bingham, billed as “a personater, musician and humorist of high repute.” 58 Due to a mixup in railroad schedules, Bingham found it necessary to cancel his St. Petersburg engagement. John Clarke was secured to replace him as the opening speaker on October 23 with a lecture on travel in London. Once again, opening night was pushed back as Clarke had overbooked himself. The following
Thursday night a sizeable audience showed up at Armistead’s Opera House, but tempers flared when the speaker never appeared. “Abominable train service” was to blame. Clarke finally arrived on Saturday evening and entertained an enormous and receptive audience; many people who had hoped to buy tickets at the door had to be turned away. Other entertainers who played to receptive St. Petersburg audiences that year were the southern ballad singer, Sara McDonald Sheridan, the “Quaker Quartet,” and the Parker Concert Company of New York.

In August, 1901, the St. Petersburg Times sponsored the “Popular Lady’s Prize Contest,” a promotional ploy designed to encourage subscriptions to the weekly newspaper. Every newspaper sold between August 1, 1901, and the deadline date of February 5, 1902, contained a blank coupon which the purchaser filled out with the lady’s name of his choice. To encourage advance subscription, the Times additionally offered an automatic “200 votes for every year’s subscription paid in advance.” Although both married and single women were encouraged to enter the competition, young, single women in town vied from the onset for the chance to win an all expense paid trip to either New York or New Orleans. Ten days after the contest officially opened the leading contender, Miss Donna Heard, had already solicited 553 votes.
Before long, the contest had primarily become a match between three young women—the Misses Donna Heard, Allie Goodwin and Pearl May. No other biographical information could be found concerning Donna Heard, but Allie Goodwin and Pearl May were two very spirited and enterprising young women. According to one report, Miss Goodwin was the proprietor of a local millinery shop; the business was adjacent to her father’s boot and shoe repair shop.\(^64\) Pearl May figured prominently among the young people in St. Petersburg; her name was mentioned repeatedly in the “Week’s Happenings” social column of the newspaper. Pearl’s mother, Mrs. Nora May, was the president of the local Woman’s Christian Temperance Union in 1901, and Pearl was quite active in the Loyal Temperance Legion that year. The headlines of the February 8, 1902, *St. Petersburg Times* proclaimed Miss May the first-place winner of the New York City trip. Allie Goodwin came in second and found herself headed for the 1902 Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans. The race was a close one, and the judges ran into problems when they counted the votes and discovered that 18,000 coupons had been submitted void of any contestant’s name. To show fairness and appreciation of the young women’s hard work, the management of the *Times* arranged a third trip for Miss Heard, the exact details of which were not immediately disclosed.\(^65\)

It is not surprising that there was such fierce competition among young women in the Popular Lady’s Prize Contest. Travel was, after all, a favorite pastime of local residents. Other forms of recreation included trolley rides through fruit groves and weekend boat trips to Pass-a-Grille. There were always church socials and fundraisers, and the lectures that were sponsored by the Woman’s Town Improvement Association. Parties and Easter egg hunts were held in Williams Park, where residents also went to hear music in the bandshell provided by the women of the town. State societies held receptions at Mrs. Cole’s hotel during “season,” and in the summer Brantley’s Bathing Pavilion was a welcome retreat from the blazing Florida heat. Young single women hosted numerous parties, and weddings were always cause for celebration. On Christmas Eve, 1901, Mr. and Mrs. George Meares married off two daughters—Anna Louisa and Ellen Melvenia. Over one hundred friends and relatives attended the double wedding. When the weather was nice, many activities were held outside. In July, 1901, a group of young people went for a moonlight sail, unchaperoned, and they did not make it back to the mainland until morning. Apparently their boat lodged itself on a sandbar while the tide was low, and they were left with no option but to swim and dance until the tide (and the sun) came up.\(^66\)

Dances were held frequently, and they were normally viewed as an accepted way of meeting with members of the opposite sex. Young women seemed anxious for the opportunity to socialize in this manner, but the young men could not always be counted on to cooperate. Indeed, the description of one dance given by the Band Boys revealed a number of problems.

The dance given by the band in the Fair building last Thursday night was not a big success. Ladies were present, but the chivalry was conspicuously lacking. . . . Proper music has not been provided, no floor managers, no callers, no dancers to call. Thursday night even the floor was not waxed, but covered with sand, rosin and cornmeal or some such substance and in a few minutes the ladies’ dresses were sadly soiled and bedraggled, while the grinding sound of the feet of a few couples would almost drown the music, and set everyone's teeth on edge.\(^67\)
At the turn of the century, St. Petersburg was still rough around the edges, but town women were enterprising in their efforts to establish a more cultured and enlightened community. These women dispelled the Victorian stereotype of housewives who were publicly and economically impotent. While proving themselves to be efficient household managers, many women also contributed to family income, allowing their families to attain a comfortable middle-class lifestyle. The keen business sense of other women—married, widowed, and single—serves as a direct contrast to the Victorian ideal of unambitious women living in sheltered innocence from worldly affairs. Local women’s organizations promoted active participation in civic and church affairs, and their efforts brought a measure of culture, political reform and social activity to St. Petersburg in 1900. Without the power of the vote, these women worked to transform their rugged environment into a comfortable, affluent community where their children could prosper and continue to promote the middle-class traditions of their parents.

While newspapers of the day lauded the public accomplishments of these mostly white, middle-class women, census data reveal the varied and intimate details of life for the women of all classes who never made the headlines. These divergent sources come together as oils on the canvas to paint a picture of women at the turn of the century that is more than a portrait. It
reveals a vibrant landscape of life filled with all the contrast and contradictions that any realistic interpretation must embody. It includes women fulfilling the Victorian ideal of home and motherhood, but it also encompasses women establishing independent economic prerogatives, reaching out in civic and church affairs and asserting a new-found political voice in pursuit of reformist ideals. It is individual women meeting, mixing and ultimately tinting each other to form the bold new colors of the twentieth-century woman.


3 12th U.S. Census 1900, Microfilm T623-170 contains manuscript rolls for Hillsborough, Hernando, and Holmes County, copy in Clearwater Public Library. (Hereafter referred to as Manuscript Census.) Patterns of mobility were traced through birth places of the children in this instance.

4 St. Petersburg Times, July 27, 1901.

5 Ibid., August 3, September 7, 14, 21, 1901.

6 Manuscript Census.
Ibid.; Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 218; *St. Petersburg Times*, July 6, 1901.

Manuscript Census.

The 1900 Census for the state of Florida used 15 years of age as a reference point for determining the number of married women.

Althea’s last name was illegible in the census. Her husband was 50 years old in 1900, and she was 38. They had been married 28 years when the census data was collected.

Manuscript Census. Tyler Hodges' mother listed her marital status as single. It may be that she never married, but she may have been widowed or divorced and listed herself as single.

This was true for at least one woman. Sarah Jane Armistead listed no children in the 1900 census, but in fact she had two children from her first marriage to John Judge. Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 224.

Manuscript Census.

*St. Petersburg Times*, October 26, 1901.

Ibid., October 26, November 2, 9, 1901.

Manuscript Census.

Manuscript Census; Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 252.

Manuscript Census: *St. Petersburg Times*, November 2, 1901.

*St. Petersburg Times*, October 19, July 6, 1901.

Ibid., July 6, 1901.

Ibid., September 21, December 28, 1901.

Manuscript Census.


*St. Petersburg Times*, June 22, August 10, 1901; Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 119.

*St. Petersburg Times*, June 22, 1901.


*St. Petersburg Times*, August 10, 1901.

Ibid.

*St. Petersburg Times*, June 28, September 7, 28, 1901.


Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 121; Fuller, *St. Petersburg*, 329; *St. Petersburg Times*, September 21, 1901.

Manuscript Census.
Twenty-five women in St. Petersburg were listed as illiterate, and of these, 22 were black.

Manuscript Census. Four single foreign-born women worked-two as housekeepers, one as a school teacher and one as a physician.

Information on the role of Sarah Armistead in the Orange Belt R.R. negotiations can be found in Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 224; June Hurley Young, *Florida’s Pinellas Peninsula* (St. Petersburg, Florida: Byron Kennedy & Co., 1984), 44.

*St. Petersburg Times*, October 5, November 23, 30, December 14, 1901; Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 203, 210, 228. It is unclear whether Claude Sullivan Pepper, the husband of Grace, is in any way related to U.S. Congressman Claude Pepper.


Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 231. It may be that the Norwoods had changed their religious denomination from Congregational to Christian Scientist by 1924 when Grismer wrote his historical account of St. Petersburg.

St. Petersburg Times, June 29, July 27, August 3, December 14, 1901; Ryan, *Womanhood in America*, 203.


*St. Petersburg Times*, May 4, June 29, October 5, 19, 1901.

Ibid., August 24, 1901.

Ibid.

Ibid., December 14, 1901.

Ibid., August 31, 1901.

Ibid., May 4, June 29, July 6, November 16, 23, 1901.

Ibid., June 8, 1901.


Manuscript Census; *St. Petersburg Times*, November 16, 1901; Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 254, 255.

Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 185-86; *St. Petersburg Times*, May 4, June 29, August 10, December 7, 1901.

Manuscript Census; Grismer, *St. Petersburg*, 256; *St. Petersburg Times*, October 5, 1901.

*St. Petersburg Times*, June 8, August 10, 1901.

Ibid., October 5, 1901.

Ibid., November 9, December 7, 1901.
57 Manuscript Census; *St. Petersburg Times*, June 8, July 6, August 10, 17, 24, October 26, December 14, 1901.

58 *St. Petersburg Times*, October 5, 1901.

59 Ibid., October 12, 19, 26, 1901.

60 Ibid., October 26, 1901.

61 Ibid., November 16, December 14, 1901, March 5, 1902.

62 Ibid., August 3, 1901.

63 Ibid., August 3, 10, 1901.


65 *St. Petersburg Times*, October 5, November 23, 1901, February 8, 1902.


67 *St. Petersburg Times*, November 30, 1901.
ODET PHILIPPE IN SOUTH FLORIDA

by J. Allison DeFoor, II

Historically, the ties between Tampa and Key West have always been strong. In the nineteenth century, when Key West was south Florida’s largest and most sophisticated city and Tampa an emerging village, the *Mascotte* was one of many ships trading between the towns. Tampa’s coup in persuading the cigar industry to relocate from Key West to Tampa in the 1880s was a turning point for both cities. It marked the beginning of Tampa’s emergence as a major city, and the start of a decline from which Key West may have only recently emerged.¹ During the depression of the 1930s, many Key West families relocated to Tampa. Even today two Key West city commissioners are the sons of Tampa fathers, and they were raised at least in part in the cigar city.²

As a son of Tampa who has relocated to the Keys, the author recently learned of an even earlier tie between these two places. Count Odet Philippe, an ancestor who is credited as the first white settler on the Pinellas peninsula, also had an extensive history in Key West and in Monroe County.³ Moreover, records in southeast Florida reveal a background for Philippe which is significantly different from that commonly accepted in the Tampa Bay area and which suggests a dark side to this historic figure.

Odet Philippe is a figure of mythical proportions in the Tampa Bay area. Indeed, there is a well-known legendary story of how the French surgeon Odet Philippe supposedly came to Tampa Bay. According to legend, Dr. Philippe and his family were intercepted on their vessel Ney by the pirate Gomez and taken prisoner while on a voyage in Florida waters. When Gomez learned that Philippe was a surgeon, he enlisted his services in the treatment of the pirate and his crew. The grateful pirate is purported to have given to Philippe a chest of treasure, a letter of protection directed to other pirates and a map indicating Old Tampa Bay. Gomez supposedly waxed eloquently about Tampa Bay generally, describing it as “The most beautiful body of water in the world, with the possible exception of the bay of Naples.”⁴ It was near Old Tampa Bay that Philippe later established his homestead of St. Helena. The site of St. Helena is preserved in large part today as Philippe Park in Safety Harbor, Florida.

The date of Philippe’s arrival at Tampa Bay has always been somewhat unclear. Older Tampa histories gave the date as early as 1823, apparently based on old family records.⁵ The plaque marking Philippe Park credits the year 1842. The earliest records of his conducting business in Tampa are dated in the late 1830s.⁶ He received title to the property under the Armed Occupation Act of 1842.⁷

Philippe is best remembered in Tampa Bay today because of his early settlement of St. Helena. On this plantation Philippe engaged in the cultivation of citrus, and he is generally credited with having planted the first commercial orange grove in central Florida. The plantation was one of the finest in the unsettled region of peninsular Florida. The site was also the previous location of an Indian village. Proof remains to this day in the form of an Indian mound over forty feet in height at the site.⁸
During the hurricane of 1848, one of the most devastating ever to hit Florida, Philippe allegedly observed a tidal wave of water coming up Tampa Bay towards his home. He saved all of his family and slaves by taking them to the top of the Indian mound. However, his home and grove did not survive the dreadful flood. Legend has it that the cask of jewels which he had received from the pirate Gomez was also lost in this flood. After the disaster, Philippe replanted his citrus grove and reestablished his home at St. Helena.9

In addition to his plantation, Philippe had a number of business interests in old Tampa. Indeed, he may have introduced the first cigarmaking from Key West, thereby anticipating the move that would come later in the 1880s. He also apparently engaged in other commercial transactions in Tampa, including land speculation, trade in livestock and slaves and ownership of a billiard hall.10

Philippe spent the duration of the Civil War far inland in what is now Pasco County, but he returned to live the remainder of his life in peace at St. Helena with his family until his death in
1869. Many descendants of this pioneer remain in the Tampa Bay area, including members of the Rumley, Booth, Kelly, Grillon, Newton, Sloan and Washington families. Today one of the most beautiful parks in Florida sits on the site of this early settler’s plantation.11

The perhaps legendary story of Philippe’s activities prior to his arrival in Tampa Bay is as sweeping as the story of his capture by the pirate Gomez. It is said that he was raised as a nobleman in Lyons, France, and studied with Napoleon Bonaparte. He supposedly went on to complete medical school to become a surgeon who was subsequently appointed by his friend Napoleon to a position of rank in the French navy. It was in this capacity that he is said to have been captured at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805 and sent to England as a prisoner of war. He is said to have made arrangements to leave England for the New World on parole and with the promise never to return to France. Released in the Bahamas, he made his way to Charleston, South Carolina, a great culture in its day, with a French population of some significance. Business reverses there led to his leaving to homestead briefly in the New River (now Ft. Lauderdale) area of Florida before departing that place for Tampa. He is said to have had two wives: one a Dorothée Desmottes and, after her death, a Marie Charlotte Florence Fontaine. By his first wife he had four daughters: Louise Poleanna, Mary Elizabeth Octavia, Charlotte Septima Marie and Melanie.12

However, records in Charleston and in Florida’s Monroe County reflect a different time frame for Philippe’s activities than previously assumed by Tampa historians. Charleston documents reflect his presence in that city through 1829. One researcher showed twenty years ago that Philippe did not practice medicine in Charleston, but he was listed in the city directories of 1819 and 1822 as a “Segar [sic] maker on East Bay Street.” On April 5, 1825, the Charleston Courier mentioned that he had mail to be picked up at the post office.13 Philippe renounced his French citizenship during January, 1829, in Charleston, and he became an American citizen.14

Philippe’s citizenship papers raise serious questions about his supposed ties to Napoleon. In his affidavit of citizenship, Philippe declared that he was thirty-four years of age at the time of his declaration of intention to become an American citizen in 1822. This would fix the date of his birth as 1788, and if true, it would cast grave doubt on the legendary affiliation between Philippe and Napoleon. It is doubtful that he could have studied with Napoleon Bonaparte who had come to France from Corsica in 1778 to attend military school and who was commissioned into the
artillery in 1785, at the age of sixteen. A birthdate in 1788 would also make Philippe some seventeen years old at the time of his capture at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, by which time he was supposedly also a surgeon.

It is clear that Philippe did his best to play up such a connection, whether it existed or not. By naming his vessel “Ney,” after the French marshal who served under Napoleon, and by calling his plantation “St. Helena,” the place of Napoleon’s exile, Philippe added to the legend. However, the existence of the citizenship affidavit filed in the federal court in Key West clearly refutes any such connection.

By 1830, Philippe was a resident of Monroe County in southeast Florida. Local records from this period show Philippe’s active involvement in the business and political affairs of the emerging frontier of southeast Florida. At different times, Philippe lived both in Key West and New River. At the time Monroe County, with a population of 517, encompassed the Keys and all of southeast Florida, including what is today Broward County. Key West was the county seat and the largest city of south Florida with a population of 688 by 1840.

Historians have made reference to Philippe residing at New River, where he produced salt and homesteaded, before going to Tampa as a result of an Indian massacre. One writer places his arrival at New River as early as January, 1828, and dates his departure as the time of the Cooley...
massacre in 1836. William Cooley and his family were the first European settlers in what is 
now Broward County. All but Mr. Cooley were massacred in an Indian attack on January 6, 
1836, at the outbreak of the Second Seminole War. Philippe and his family are said to have 
had escaped, having been warned by friendly Indians. After the massacre the settlements in the New 
River vicinity were abandoned, and many pioneer families moved to Key West for safety.

That Philippe was a contemporary of William Cooley, Jr., in the early settlement of New River 
is borne out by surviving records. On February 17, 1833, both William Cooley and “Obed 
Phillipe” received appointments as justices of the peace, having been nominated by the 
governor and confirmed by Florida’s territorial legislature. Philippe’s name appeared four names 
away from Cooley’s in the 1830 census, suggesting proximity of residence. On August 9, 1833, 
a marriage license was issued in Key West to “George P. Washington to marry Mary Elizabeth 
Octavia Phillippi [sic] of New River.” On August 12, 1833, Justice of the Peace William Cooley 
performed the wedding ceremony for Washington and “Mary Elizabeth Octavia Phillipe of New 
River.” (It should by now be apparent that correct spelling was a minor concern in the 
nineteenth century.) Washington was from a Key West family. He and Mary Philippe apparently 
travelled to Key West to get a marriage license and then went to the bride's home in New River 
for their wedding three days later.

The county records for 1833 indicate that Philippe still had some remaining business matters in 
Charleston, though the exact nature of the dealings is unclear. On September 6, 1833, Philippe 
sold a slave, Nelly, together with her infant and two other children, Julia and Madelaine. The 
slaves were recorded to be in Charleston. Philippe was described as “late of Charleston in the 
State of South Carolina but at present of said County and Territory,” and the document was 
processed in New River. The sale was to Edward Chandler of Charleston, but his title was in 
trust for “Marie Charlotte Florance Philippe the present wife of the said Odet Philippe.” He 
would use this trust device later, both in Key West and in Tampa.

Philippe’s concern with the mainland portion of Monroe County is revealed in one further 
document. Although his place of residence other than Monroe County generally is unspecified, 
he signed a protest concerning severance of all of Monroe County north of Bahia Honda to 
become the newly-formed Dade County, with its seat at Indian Key. This document, dated 
February, 1836, placed Philippe back in Key West.

Philippe’s time in Key West appears to have overlapped his stay at New River, so it has been 
suggested that he may have maintained a home in Key West even as he homesteaded at New 
River. The recollections of a Charleston physician who was a resident of Key West from 1829 
to 1833 include a dialogue between the physician and a “French quack” who was a “segar 
maker” by trade and who appears to have been Philippe. The recollection, published under the 
title “Florida Sketches” in the Charleston Mercury of July 12, 1833, also relates that the French 
doctor, in addition to practicing medicine, kept a coffee room and billiard table. These 
activities, both in terms of industriousness and nature, comport with Philippe's later business 
avtivities in Tampa.

The earliest record of Philippe in Monroe County consists of a deed from him, dated April 22, 
1830, relating to a building he sold to R. A. Stanard. The deed was executed in Key West and for
$100 conveyed “A Small Building belonging to me situated on the back part of the government house which I have occupied in Key West.” A more precise location of the house is unknown today.

By the mid-1830s, Philippe had substantial business interest in Key West. A bill of sale, dated August 25, 1835, at Key West, shows he purchased a “Billiard Table, Bar fixtures, etc.” for $319.88. Philippe paid for these with several notes. In June, 1836, he deeded the billiard table, bar and other personal property to William R. Hackley, once again in trust for his wife, which served to shelter his assets from attachment by creditors. The deed specifically stated that Philippe was “Late of Charleston,” but “at present a resident of said City,” referring to Key West. William R. Hackley was the son of Richard S. Hackley, who was formerly the consul for the United States at Madrid. In 1818, Hackley had purchased a part of the land grant of the Duke of Alagon. The so-called “Hackley Grant” became the site of the first settlement of Tampa by Americans when it was seized for use as a fort by Colonel George M. Brooke in 1824. This was the subject of considerable litigation between the federal government and the heirs of Hackley into the 1900s.

Records show Philippe continued to have personal and business ties to Key West through the 1830s. A marriage license was issued on May 22, 1837, to Ramon Moreno and “Miss Septima Phillipe” [sic], both of whom were identified as residents of Key West. The marriage certificate also specified that Septima was the daughter of Mr. O. Phillippi [sic] and that he was a resident of Key West at that time. Philippe’s interest in cigars, which he had apparently pursued in Charleston, was continued in Key West. Walter C. Maloney, in his definitive history of Key West published in 1876, referred to Philippe being engaged in the cigar business with one Shubael Brown with a labor force of six men during the period of approximately 1837-38.

A concrete piece of evidence linking Philippe to Key West in the 1840s is the presence there of the gravestone of his wife, Marie Charlotte Florance [sic] Philippe, who died in 1846. The grave is located on the grounds of the “Old Stone” Methodist Church at Eaton Street and Simonton Street and is visible to this day from Simonton Street on the side of the church. The site occupied by the church was originally the location of one of Key West’s early cemeteries. The graves were later relocated, and it is unclear why Mrs. Philippe’s grave was not also moved. The inscription on the grave (translated from the French) reads:

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Rest in Peace
Marie Charlotte Florance Phillipe
Born in Paris Dec. 25, 1801
Deceased in Key West, Dec. 20, 1846, at the age of 45
Friend of the unhappy
Supporter of the orphans
She spent her life relieving the pains of her peers
She leaves behind her husband Ot. Phillipe and a
great number of friends attracted to her by her
generous heart and soul.
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A final tie to Key West remains. On September 8, 1856, Odet Philippe witnessed the marriage of his daughter, Charlotte Septima Grillon, to Jobe Andrews at her residence in Key West. This was at least Septima’s third marriage.

It becomes apparent, of course, that Philippe’s life in southeast Florida began to overlap the period in which he purportedly lived in the Tampa Bay area. It would appear that his business dealings in the New River area from 1829 to 1836, coupled with his dealings in Key West from at least 1830 through 1838 and perhaps as late as 1856, together with his activities in Tampa beginning at least by 1837, involve substantial overlap. Furthermore, it is generally accepted that he had substantial business dealings in Havana, all of which raises more questions than answers.

A plausible explanation was suggested by another descendant of Dr. Philippe’s in Key West. After first arriving in Key West, the author had occasion to become acquainted with State Representative Joe Allen, Jr., a fifth-generation “Conch.” In addition to being the founder of the Key West Art and Historical Society, Allen was a journalist in the community for many decades and is one of its most active historians. Upon learning that the author is also a descendant of Dr. Philippe, Mr. Allen shared a depth of history such as only Key Westers could retain. He stated that the house where Dr. Philippe had lived in Key West was at 304 Elizabeth Street, also known as the “Pirate House.” He related that some of the doctor’s effects and clothes had been taken from this home to become a still extant exhibit about Philippe at the Art and Historical Society Museum, located at East Martello Tower in Key West.

Mr. Allen went on to state that the story which was so widely disseminated in Tampa Bay concerning Philippe’s encounter with the pirate Gomez contained only the barest grain of truth. According to family tradition in Key West, Dr. Philippe’s involvement with the pirates actually consisted of fencing their goods, and he had in fact to leave Key West because things had gotten too “hot” in the local community. While no substantive proof has been found in Key West for the story, this specter of dark dealings has the ring of truth. First of all, Key Westers keep history as perhaps no others in Florida do. They are fiercely dedicated to its accuracy and have a long memory both collectively and individually. The widespread geographical extent of Philippe’s holdings, from New River to Key West to Tampa with Havana thrown in, would seem to indicate an unusually high degree of commercial activity. Further, having allegedly left Charleston virtually penniless and been burned out by the Indians, he managed a rare accumulation of capital in a short period of time, in an area desperately short of capital in its day. Certainly, illicit connections with pirates could explain Philippe’s mobility and good fortune. While other authors
have suggested possible dark dealings of another kind, specifically slave trading, no proof has ever been forthcoming.\(^3^6\) The explanation maintained by the families in Key West seems, however, to be tantalizingly consistent with the unusual business dealings of Philippe in his day.

Whatever the conclusion regarding the exact nature of Odet Philippe’s business dealings, he cannot be claimed solely as a founding father of the Tampa Bay area. He also had significant and long-standing business contacts and residences in southeast Florida. Both Key West and Ft. Lauderdale have claims to Dr. Philippe as a pioneer settler. However, wherever he went, this French entrepreneur retained an air of mystery that has become legendary.

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1 L. Glenn Westfall, *Key West, Cigar City, U.S.A.* (Key West, FL: Key West Preservation Board, 1984).

2 The commissioners are Joe Balbontin and James Mira.


4 The story has been told by many authors, but perhaps none more magically than the source of this quotation, D. B. McKay, in *Pioneer Florida*, II, 299. Most of the romanticism surrounding the story of Philippe may be traced directly to an article by Maxwell Hunter, “Dr. Odet Philippe Was Pinellas Peninsula’s First White Settler,” published in the *St. Petersburg Times*, December 20, 1936. The article appears to have been largely based on the recollections of Philippe’s descendants then living in Pinellas County.


7 The act provided for the granting of 160 acres of land to any head of family or single man who would arm himself to defend the property, occupy it and cultivate at least five acres. James W. Covington, *The Story of Southwest Florida* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1957), 106, and Appendix B, 422.


9 Ibid., 302.


12 Ibid., 299.


14 According to records of the United States District Court in Charleston, South Carolina, “Odet Phillipe” declared his intention to become an American citizen on December 3, 1822, when he was thirty-four years old. The clerk of the court acted upon the request on January 7, 1829, presumably after a required waiting period. Philippe’s 1829
declaration stated: “I Odet Phillippe [sic] a native of France born in Lyon now aged Forty one years Do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and I do absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to every foheran [sic] Prince Potentate State or Sovereignty whatsoever and particularly Charles the tenth the King of France – so help me God – [signed] Odet Philippe." Given the controversy over the years regarding the spelling of his name, it is interesting to note that the body of the declaration appears to be in different writing than the signature and, indeed, spells the name differently. An original copy of this document was filed in the federal courts in Key West in 1829. It was surrendered, along with other such documents, by the courts to the Monroe County Library for safekeeping, and it remains there today. Packet 1829, Sheet #1, Document from United States Circuit Court (Charleston), Citizenship Oath of Odet Philippe.


16 Straight, “Odet Philippe,” 706. Based on the doctor's naturalization in Charleston, in January, 1829, it would appear that the year 1829 is more likely.


18 Jacob Rhett Motte, Journey into Wilderness: An Army Surgeon’s Account of Life in Camp and Field during the Creek and Seminole Wars, 1836-1838 (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1963, edited by James F. Sunderman), 223,309; McKay, Pioneer Florida, II, 300; Browne, Key West, 85.

19 U. S. Territorial Papers, Florida, XXXIV, 817; U. S. Census, 1830, manuscript return for Monroe County.

20 Official Records of Monroe County, Book B, 11-12.

21 Ibid., 40.


26 Ibid., Book B, 399. Philippe had used this trust device before, when resident at New River. He also would use it again in 1842, when living in Tampa, according to McKay, Pioneer Florida, II, 304. Doubtless this technique was used to shelter his assets from attachment by creditors.

27 Official Records of Monroe County, Book B, 284.


29 Official Records of Monroe County, Book B, 299.

30 Maloney, History of Key West, 25. See also Brown, Key West, 125.

31 Neal Weaver, “Two Old Graves Lie Under Church,” Key West Citizen, August 28, 1960.
The author expresses his appreciation to Joan Schwartz of Montreal, Canada, for translating the inscription from French to English.

Official Records of Monroe County, Book E, 837.

The first marriage was to Ramon Moreno. The second was to John Grillon on June 12, 1843. It was performed and originally recorded in Wakulla County, but a copy was recorded in Monroe County on August 15, 1855. Official Records of Monroe County, Book E, 697. Apparently there was yet another marriage for Septima since Odet Philippe’s will mentions her under the name of Charlotte Septima Laughridge. McKay, *Pioneer Florida*, II, 303.


Ibid.
During its years of greatest glory between 1891 and 1920, the Tampa Bay Hotel was the principal stimulus for tourists to come to Tampa. It represented the grand hotels of the United States with spacious grounds, comfortable rooms, long and wide verandas, good food and suitable entertainment including a bar, professional hunter, boats, golf course, tennis courts and a casino where well-known actors and singers performed. In addition to these attractions, Henry B. Plant, builder and owner of the Tampa Bay Hotel, sponsored the first South Florida Fairs on land that he owned northwest of the hotel. In order to house the exhibits, an exhibition hall was built and race track constructed for the horse races common to such fairs.¹

After the death of Plant in 1899, the fairs temporarily ceased, but local boosters soon developed other attractions. When the Tampa Bay Hotel came under the ownership of the City of
Tampa in 1905, it was annually leased to a manager who took the lead in organizing events. The Florida State Fairs were instituted for two years in 1905 and 1906 with state aid, but after poor attendance the fairs were discontinued. Still, the manager of the hotel, T. J. Laud-Brown, continued the celebration of Gasparilla Day and the parade which had been part of the fair, and he did his best to promote other celebrations and conventions that would bring guests to his hotel. The Panama Canal Celebration in 1910 and the Census Celebration of 1911 were two of the festivals held by Laud-Brown to attract visitors. Besides use of the fairgrounds area as a festival center, Plant Field served the community as a landing field for airplanes, race track for horses and motorcycles and playing field for baseball.

Leading citizens of Tampa searched for a way to attract more tourists to their city. Jacksonville had become the first Florida city to lure a major league baseball team for spring training, and such a team might be suitable for Tampa. The baseball teams had been training in warmer climates for many years before opening their regular season. In 1899 the Chicago National League team had trained on a ranch located between Deming and Silver City, New Mexico. As a result of this time spent on the western ranch, some of the Chicago fans called the members of the team Cowboys or Rough Riders.\(^2\)
In April, 1912, the city council of Tampa approved a measure stating that Tampa had suitable facilities as a training place for a major league team, and the council authorized Mayor D. B. McKay to enter into correspondence with Charles Murphy, owner of the Chicago Cubs. Mayor McKay formed a Booster’s Committee to raise the necessary funds so that cash offers to pay the expenses of the Cubs could be made. The sum of $100 for each of the thirty-five players was required, and in addition, other expenses had to be met. However, it was hoped that sale of tickets would provide enough to pay back the businessmen who made the pledges. Finally, a contract was signed between Murphy and the Booster’s Club in a meeting held on December 31, 1912, in the Board of Trade rooms in the city hall. Tampa had the distinction of winning the competition for the Cubs’ training site with other cities such as Galveston, Texas, and St. Petersburg. Although St. Petersburg had many rooming houses and no major hotel, her citizens secured the St. Louis Browns in 1914.3

According to one baseball authority, Murphy was an erratic owner who, due to misconduct, would be forced from his position by the other owners within one year. However, the Chicago
team had done well in 1906, 1907, 1908 and 1910, winning championships in these years with the famous Tinker to Evers to Chance combination. By 1912 the Cubs had gone into a decline. When John McGraw of the New York Giants received $8,000 for managing his team, Manager Chance protested that he received only $5,000. He was released, and Evers took his place. In another radical change, Murphy announced that the players would not be allowed to smoke or drink and they would have rigid times for curfew and breakfast.4

Meanwhile, in Tampa plans were being made for the coming of the Cubs who would leave Chicago on February 15, 1913. A permanent organization called the Mid-Winter Baseball Association was formed to organize a schedule for the Cubs and sell and distribute tickets. Soon it was announced that the Havana Athletics, composed of some players who had competed in
American colleges, would play three games against the Cubs. Posters advertising the games of February 24, 26, and 28 were displayed throughout Tampa, and tickets which cost $5 for the entire schedule of eleven games were available at twenty outlets, mostly cigar stands.\(^5\)

Although Plant Field had a baseball diamond, the committee decided to upgrade the facilities to first-class status by making some rather hurried improvements. The area had been cut in half by the extension of Cass Street across the Hillsborough River, but there still was considerable room for the fair and athletic activities. Steve Kissinger, appointed groundskeeper for the ball park, tore out sod from the race track oval and placed it on the diamonds. Convicts, assigned to the work project, installed plumbing for showers and toilets and laid cement for floors and walls, and other convicts brought in clay to fill low spots along the playing surface. Within a short time the groundskeeper from Chicago Westside Ballpark came to supervise the laying out of two baseball diamonds.\(^6\)

On February 15, 1913, a crowd of one hundred fans dressed in heavy winter clothing gathered at the Park Row Railroad Station in Chicago to watch the Cubs (previously known as the Spuds and Trojans) leave for Tampa. Climbing aboard the two Pullman cars were five catchers, thirteen pitchers, one first baseman, two second basemen, two third basemen, four shortstops, nine outfielders, one first baseman, two second basemen, four shortstops, nine outfielders, one trainer, one manager and approximately ten reporters. It would be a tedious forty-eight hour trip in the unairconditioned Pullmans, but the trip was worth it for soon snow would fall in Chicago.\(^7\)

Members of the Tampa Winter Baseball Association greeted the party from Chicago at the railroad station when the Seaboard train arrived at the station in the late afternoon of February 17. The new arrivals were taken to the Tampa Bay Hotel where Mayor D. B. McKay greeted them. At the hotel first evidence surfaced that Tampa had not fully prepared for this visit when it was found that President Murphy had not made room reservations for his players, but the hotel staff secured rooms for the unexpected thirty-six guests. The Chicago writers were given guest privileges to various Tampa clubs including the German Club, Elks, Tampa Yacht Club and Board of Trade. On the following night they were guests of the city baseball organization at Garcia’s Restaurant where Peter O. Knight, a prominent attorney, and Ed Lambright, editor of the *Tribune*, spoke to the group.\(^8\)
In the bright sunshine on the morning of February 19, the Cubs began their daily workout. Soon they discovered that they were not in shape and that their facilities were not ready either. Due to heavy rains the ground was too soft and spongy, and the roller had done a poor job on the infield. In addition, the showers were not finished, there was no hot water and the players had to walk back to the hotel and bathe in their rooms which had hot water. Mayor D. B. McKay ordered emergency over-time work to get the grounds in shape—the infield was cleared and resodded with Bermuda grass in the center and clay from the race track on the base paths, better drains were dug and showers and lockers were constructed in the Woman’s Building of the fairgrounds. Twenty-two boxes with eight seats in each for fans who wished better seating were installed, and the bleacher seats were placed in position. While these changes were being made, the pitchers were able to work out, but the others played soccer and basket ball and ran around the race track. Due to heavy rains on the 18th and 19th, workouts were very brief. Large numbers of hotel guests who came to watch the shortened practices included William Jennings Bryan who was a guest at the hotel for his Chautauqua talk at the Tampa Bay Casino. Within the space of several weeks, Bryan would assume the position of Secretary of State in President Woodrow Wilson’s cabinet.9

The Havana Athletics, eighteen in number and travelling on the Mascotte from Havana, landed on February 20 at Port Tampa. They were greeted by Consul Rafael M. Ybor and members of the Cuban community and escorted to the Tampa Bay Hotel where they stayed. On the following day they used one of the two fields for practice.10
Although the first game scheduled for February 24 was rained out, a crowd of 5,000 to 6,000 people gathered on the 26th and saw the Cubs win 4-2. The large crowd, which was nearly one-half Cuban, set a record for athletic contests in Tampa and posed a problem for those who had planned the game since not enough ticket sellers had been hired. Some fans sneaked into the game through open fences. In addition to long automobile and ticket-selling lines, people found many mistakes in the printed program. There should have been better planning for sixty-nine business firms had promised to close early for the game. Admission prices were not very high—25 and 50 cents for bleachers, 75 cents for grandstand and one dollar for box seats. The hardware firm of Knight and Wall donated the balls, and the Tampa Municipal Band played tunes for the fans. In the remaining two games the Cubans were beaten again, 12-4 and 17-1. The crowds were good for these final games because some cigar factories dismissed their work force early for the games.11

The players appeared to like the Tampa Bay area. At least four decided to adopt Florida as a winter home, and one purchased a thirty-acre farm where he cleared the land and put in six acres of orange trees. Fred Toney caught two fourteen-pound fish from the Hillsborough River which he exhibited on the porch of the Tampa Bay Hotel. Seven players wanting to have a little fun with a more serious team mate staged a fake badger-bulldog fight, which was illegal and led to
the “arrest” of the player who was quickly released by the Tampa police who were in on the joke. Several fans gave a fighting cock named Tampa to Manager Evers who kept it in his room.\(^\text{12}\)

After the series of games with the Cubans had taken place, the Mid-Winter, Baseball Committee could not schedule any more suitable games for there were no other major league teams training nearby. One game was played with the soldiers at Fort Dade on Egmont Key after the Cubs traveled to the site on a crowded steamer, but the remaining games were intrasquad ones with the regulars against the substitutes. In order to stimulate some enthusiasm both among the fans and players, Manager Stanford of the hotel invited the University of Florida Glee Club to sing for the Cubs, and he awarded a silver cup as a prize to the team that won the most games.\(^\text{13}\)

Although from the beginning of training, the Cubs liked Tampa and wanted a five-year contract, the city government was reluctant to renew the pact. Attendance had fallen rapidly after the thorough defeats given to the Havana Athletics, and admission was reduced to 25 cents for the final games. It was estimated that the association lost from $500 to $800 on the spring training season. Finally, on March 19, 1913, a five-year contract was signed. After finishing the
games at Tampa, the Cubs left on a special train which took them back to Chicago with game stops at Jacksonville, Chattanooga, Memphis, Nashville, Louisville, Indianapolis and the University of Chicago where the regulars played the reserves. The change to Tampa did not help the Cubs for they had won 91 games and lost 59 in 1912 and they fell to an 88 and 65 record in 1913. Still, they were the first of many teams to train in the Tampa Bay area throughout the years. Plant Field would remain the spring training grounds of several teams, including the Cincinnati Reds, until the opening of Al Lopez Field in the early 1960s.14


3 Minutes of Tampa City Council, April 2, 1912, City Clerk’s Office, Tampa, Florida; Tampa Times, January 1, 1913; Tampa Tribune, December 26, 1954.


5 Tampa Times, January 25, February 15, 1913.

6 Ibid., February 8, 1913; Chicago Tribune, February 16, 1913.

7 Chicago Daily News, February 16, 1913; Chicago Tribune, February 16, 1913.

8 Tampa Times, February 17, 1913; Tampa Tribune, February 18, 1913.

9 Tampa Times, February 19, 1913; Chicago Tribune, February 20, 1913.

10 Tampa Tribune, February 22, 1913.

11 Chicago Tribune, February 21, 1913.


13 Chicago Tribune, March 10, 1913; Chicago Daily News, March 17, 1913.

14 Tampa Times, March 18, 1913; Tampa Tribune, March 19, 1913.
On April 6, 1917, the United States entered the “war to end all wars.” However, there was little agreement at the time as to why the country should declare war on Germany. President Woodrow Wilson, reelected in 1916 with the campaign slogan, “He Kept Us Out of War,” stated that the United States had been pushed from neutrality to conflict by German provocations. While unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmerman telegram were galling, British warships had also violated American neutral rights at sea. Nevertheless, despite the divided loyalties of many German and Irish immigrants, American hearts and minds tended to identify with the British and French. Moreover, the financial interests of numerous American bankers and businessmen were linked to the fate of the Allies.

Whether based on national honor or national interest, the United States’ declaration of war committed the country to the Allies’ cause. Lasting nineteen months, American participation in World War I cost $46 million per day and left the country with a debt that was twenty times the federal debt in 1916. The war also cost the nation 123,547 dead and 231,722 wounded.

Florida, under the flamboyant Governor Sidney J. Catts, responded to Wilson’s call for a crusade to make the world safe for democracy. On April 8, 1917, the Florida Naval Militia was called into service and quickly dispatched to Charleston, South Carolina. Shipyards in Tampa contracted to build twenty-three steel ships and four wooden cargo carriers for the burgeoning maritime trade. People sang, “I Didn’t Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier,” while the state began to mobilize and put itself on a war footing. Three hundred men from Tampa’s Cuban Club entered military service in the hope of proving their loyalty to their adopted country.

Despite its comparatively small population, Florida sent 33,331 men into the ranks of the armed forces. Almost 70 percent of those called for duty through conscription were accepted by the military, and Florida men made up .9 percent of the total number of Americans who served. Most of these recruits from the Tampa Bay area were sent to places like Camp Joseph Wheeler in Georgia and Camp Jackson near Columbia, South Carolina, for their basic training. Then many boarded troopships for the voyage to France. Upon arriving “over there,” they were moved into the front lines, or over the front if they were flyers in the Aero Corps. As two out of every three sent to France saw action, many men from the Sunshine State were tested in the crucible of combat. Floridians won eighteen Distinguished Service Crosses for gallantry at places like Chateau-Thierry and the Argonne. Over one thousand died in action during the war. Diseases spawned by the trenches cut down many more of the “doughboys.”

On the homefront civilians also did their part. The economy of the Tampa Bay region had taken a slight downturn early in the war due to the loss of overseas markets for exports such as phosphate products. American entry into the conflict brought a scarcity of some consumer goods, and rising food prices made it easy for citizens to observe “meatless” and “wheatless” days in support of the war. Billboards proclaimed that “Food Will Win the War,” and the federal Food Administration urged voluntary conservation. Liberty Loan and Red Cross drives gave the
population the means to feel that they, too, were participants in the struggle against Germany, which was represented as an evil empire under Kaiser Wilhelm and the “Huns.” Even children helped do their part by gathering peach pits for use in the manufacture of gas masks for soldiers at the front.

Sometimes homefront zeal led to paranoia and nativism with accompanying hostility and mob violence. Americans of German descent and recent, immigrants generally served as targets for outbursts of hatred aroused by wartime propaganda. Courses in German language and literature were dropped by many schools. German spies and saboteurs were believed to represent a real threat even though not a single one was ever located. Patriotic citizens also harassed so-called “slackers,” who were Americans charged with failing to do their fair share to support the war. Anyone brave enough to criticize the war was suspected of being an agent of the Kaiser, and the Justice Department was given broad powers to prosecute espionage and sedition which came to include any criticism of the war, the government or its allies. Even the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, did not end the domestic turmoil created by the war.

Nevertheless, the Great War had several positive effects on the development of modern Florida. Farmers temporarily enjoyed unheard-of profits for their crops during the war. Victorious veterans, such as Sumter L. Lowry and Spessard L. Holland, returned home and became leading citizens in their communities. Many of the thousands of servicemen stationed in Florida returned after demobilization to become part of the boom of the 1920s. Winter tourists, who had visited the Sunshine State during the war because their favorite European vacation spots were inaccessible, kept on coming after the armistice. While by 1920 many Americans yearned for the simpler world that had existed before the Great War, there would be no return to normalcy for Florida or the nation as a whole.
Upon entering World War I, the United States initially relied on volunteer enlistments to recruit men who were asked to defend basic values like motherhood.
The Navy appealed to men of action who wanted to make history by fighting for the flag and liberty.

Some of the first American troops sent to Europe came from state militias. Captain Sumter L. Lowry of Tampa commanded Company H of the Second Florida Infantry which served in France after active duty in Mexico during 1916.

Photograph from *Ole 93* by Sumter L. Lowry.
The Third Division, First Battalion, of the Florida Naval Militia left for active duty on April 8, 1917, two days after the U.S. declaration of war. Before departing for Charleston, South Carolina, the group posed in front of Militia Headquarters, previously the Sarasota Yacht and Automobile Club.

Photograph courtesy of Sarasota County Historical Archives.

Pinellas County men called to duty stand at attention for the first time. The Selective Service System began conscripting men in June, 1917.

Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.
On September 19, 1917, draftees gathered at the Tampa intersection of Lafayette Street (today’s Kennedy Boulevard) and Franklin Street for a send-off parade in their honor.

Photograph courtesy of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.

A Tampa parade honoring draftees as it moved along Zack Street on September 1917.

Photograph courtesy of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.
State militiamen from the Lakeland area marching down Main Street toward the railroad station in September, 1917. The men were on their way to Camp Wheeler in Georgia for training prior to embarkation for Europe.

Photograph from *Yesterday’s Polk County* by Louise K. Frisbie.

Many airmen who served in World War I trained in Florida since the weather was so dependable. The Army established this training facility at Carlstrom Field in Arcadia.

Photograph from *Yesterday’s Florida* by Nixon Smiley.
An encampment of troops at Whitted Airport in the heart of St. Petersburg made training a common sight for local residents who gathered here to watch the flight of a blimp.

Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.

A military blimp hovering above Whitted Airport in the heart of St. Petersburg demonstrated some of the danger involved in fighting “modern” warfare.

Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.
Many people who were exempt from the military draft donned uniforms nevertheless. The Sarasota Girls Naval Militia, trained by Drill Master Henry Grinton, appeared at parades and other patriotic events during the war. On July 2, 1917, they posed in front of the Sarasota’s Women’s Club.

Photograph courtesy of Sarasota County Historical Archives.

Lakeland High School cadets drilled on campus under the command of their principal, Major Charles M. Jones, a graduate of West Point.

Photograph from Yesterday's Lakeland by Hampton Dunn.
The Home Guards were paramilitary units of volunteers who were organized by local governments to police the homefront during the war. As this view of the Lakeland Home Guards shows, many of the men were exempt from military service because of their age.

Photograph from *Yesterday's Lakeland* by Hampton Dunn.

Pinellas County Home Guards posed on the steps of the county courthouse.

Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.
The local economy was stimulated by wartime spending for military training and war materiel. In 1917, the Tampa Dock Company began construction of ships for the war effort. The Ybor Channel is in the background.

Photograph courtesy of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.

The *Lithopolis*, the first steel ship built for the war in Tampa, was finally towed out of port in December, 1918, a month after the armistice.

Photograph courtesy of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.
Relying heavily on voluntary measures to finance the war, the federal government issued bonds that were sold to the public. The five loan campaigns, including four “Liberty Loans,” paid two-thirds of the war's cost, whereas taxes accounted for only one-third.
The campaigns for war bonds tried to rally everyone on the homefront, including women and children, behind the crusade to defend liberty.
A “liberty parade” on July 4, 1918, drew a crowd of spectators who lined Tampa’s Franklin Street to show their support for the war.

Photograph courtesy of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.

A regiment from St. Petersburg marching in a wartime parade along Central Avenue.

Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.
A group of patriotic Pinellas County residents posed with an eagle and the flags of the Allies – Great Britain, France and the United States.

Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.

Tampa’s German-American Club (shown here on a postcard with its president superimposed) was closed down at the beginning of the war by super-patriots who had little sympathy for “hyphenated Americans.” German-Americans never returned to the building which still stands on Nebraska Avenue in Ybor City.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.
Rather than resort to forced rationing, the government promoted voluntary conservation. The U.S. Food Administration, headed by Herbert Hoover, sold its message through poster art.
This plea for books undoubtedly served to reassure mothers and wives about what their loved-ones did in their spare time.

Over 1,000 Floridians never returned from “over there.” Leslie E. Collier, the first Highlands County man killed in the war, died in France on August 8, 1918, a few days before his nineteenth birthday. Sebring’s American Legion Post was named for him. Photograph from The Fifty Years of Sebring, 1912-1962.
After the armistice on November 11, 1918, Americans celebrated the end of the fighting. A 1918 parade in Sarasota welcomed local boys home. The flag pole on the right was erected at Five-Points in 1917 in honor of Sarasota servicemen.

Photograph courtesy of Sarasota County Historical Archives.

Sarasota’s first Armistice Day parade in 1919 marked the anniversary of the end of World War I. The national holiday, now Veterans’ Day, long served as a reminder of the price Americans paid in the Great War.

Photograph courtesy of Sarasota County Historical Archives.
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Editors’ Note: During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, leading newspapers engaged in the now familiar practice of boosting both their own sales and Florida development by printing expansive special editions. Handsomely illustrated, these editions featured portraits of prominent Floridians and colorful descriptions of far-flung cities and towns. Often written by outside reporters with an eye for telling detail, the resulting articles offer glimpses of various communities at a particular point in time. The following article, originally entitled “Fort Myers and the Beautiful Caloosahatchee,” appeared in the “South Florida and Christmas Edition” of Jacksonville’s Florida Times-Union and Citizen, published on December 19, 1897. One of the original issues is preserved in Special Collections of the University of South Florida Library.

South Florida is considered as a semi-tropical region, but if there is any particular section of the State that should be thus classed more than another, it is that lying south of the Caloosahatchee River, in Lee County, and the islands that extend southward to Key West. Here may be found a land that is not unlike the tropical islands of the Gulf of Mexico, for many of the tropical fruits found growing in the West Indies, and which are found nowhere else in the United States, thrive and bear fruit throughout Lee County equally as well as in their native soil.

Up to within a few years ago this was practically an unknown land. A few hundred settlers had wandered this way, chiefly for the purpose of carrying on the stock business, and enthusiastic sportsmen, who always seek out the least-frequented locations in which to hunt and fish, had found this the ideal spot for hunting the deer, turkey, and panther, and to take delight in playing with the many kinds of game fish that filled the waters.

But Lee County was destined to suddenly come into more prominence; and this was brought about through the great misfortune that befell the State in the winter of 1894-95. The world knows the history of that terrible calamity to a brave people—the loss of their orange groves, the labors of years gone in one night. So terrible and unexpected was the blow that even the people of Florida would not believe that any portion had escaped the icy blast from the north, such as was never known to have visited this flowery land before. The truth was Florida as a whole had not been doomed even temporarily, and soon skeptics began to believe that there was a line beyond which dangerous breezes do not penetrate—the Caloosahatchee River. This was brought about mainly by an exhibit at the South Florida Fair at Orlando, held March 19 to 23, 1895, six weeks after the damaging freeze of February 8 of that year. At that fair orange blossoms, ripe oranges, lemons, and grapefruit, coconuts, and a great variety of vegetables were displayed to the amazement of the thousands who came to the fair.

From that time people began to believe that there was a new section of Florida to be opened up, where fruits and vegetables could be produced without the dangers to be encountered in old, settled parts of the State, and as a result, in the three years that have passed the growth and development of Lee County have been wonderful.

The seat of the county government, business, educational, and social center of the county, has always been the town of Fort Myers. It has a place in history as being a military post in the Indian wars.
Fort Myers is situated on the south bank of the Caloosahatchee River, which stream heads out of the great Lake Okeechobee, and runs west into the Gulf of Mexico at Punta Rassa. The river has a width of one and a half to two miles at Fort Myers. It is reached over one of the prettiest water routes to be found in the State, and the ride on the Plant Line steamer St. Lucie, from Punta Gorda, is always considered a very delightful experience. The boat has comfortable berths, excellent meals are served, and the genial commander, Captain H. Fischer and his crew are very alert to the comfort of their passengers. This, together with the novel scenery, consisting of many glimpses of the deep, blue Gulf and pretty islands stretched along the coast, make this one of the most enchanting trips for the Northern tourist.

One may easily imagine, as he approaches the town of Fort Myers, that he is about to land on a tropical island of the Gulf. It is unlike any other portion of the peninsula that he has visited. It is a veritable tropical garden, and even the thriving places of business are hemmed in by dense growth, unfamiliar to the visitor who has never traveled in a tropical clime. Tall trees loom up above the house tops, with large glossy leaves. They are the avocado or alligator pear trees of the warmer countries, flourishing and producing the peculiar fruit that is beginning to be considered a great delicacy by the educated American palate.

Then, as the visitor finds himself in the town, he notices many other trees that he has not become familiar with in his travels in Florida. They are the coconut, sapodilla, mango, tamarind,
date palm, sugar-apple, seagrape, Barbadoes gooseberry, and other varieties from the tropics. The flower gardens, too, have a different look, for poincianas, alamandas, etc., predominate, and furnish a variety of color that cannot be found in the gardens of colder regions.

In addition to this, orange groves are to be seen on all sides, the orange, grapefruit, and lemon trees in all the glory of matured trees, with no scars to tell of setbacks, while the limbs bend low with the ripe fruit. Many of these orange trees are twenty-five years old, and there has never been any interruption in their fruit production from the time they first began to bear. Nestling these gardens and orange groves are pretty cottages, the homes of the people of this thrifty little tropical city, the whole presenting a scene that delights the visitor, who invariably pronounces it the prettiest town in the State.

The population of Fort Myers is about 1,000. A neat courthouse building is situated in the center of the town. The county is entirely free from debt, has sufficient cash in the treasury to pay for all running expenses, and the tax rate is as low as any.

The county is also blessed with a good set of officials, who are serving the people faithfully. They are William M. Hendry, Clerk of the Circuit Court; Thomas W. Langford, Sheriff; J. S. Singletary, Tax Collector; James Evans, Tax Assessor; Robert A. Henderson, Treasurer; George W. Powell, County Judge; W. W. Bostick, Superintendent of Schools; T. M. Park, F.J. Wilson and J. J. Chapman, members of the school board. The county’s legislative Representative is Captain F. A. Hendry of Fort Thompson.

The town government is composed as follows: Mayor Jas. L. Harn; Clerk and Treasurer T. H. Levens; Marshal and Collector Frank Carson; Assessor C. W. Thompson; Justice of the Peace H. N. Selly.

The town is well supplied with nearly every feature that goes to make up a progressive city. The Fort Myers hotel is just receiving the finishing touches, and will throw open its doors to the public on January 1, 1898. It takes the place of the old Hendry House, and has all modern appointments, including airy rooms, large halls, large verandas, electric lights, hot and cold baths, fire protection, etc. Connected with the house will be billiard rooms and bowling alleys, wharf, boats, and every facility to enjoy the great hunting and fishing of this neighborhood. Game will be a feature of the table. The hotel has been erected by H. O’Neill, the well-known merchant prince of New York.
A smaller hotel is the Inn, conducted by Mrs. L. Gomm, where tourists will find excellent accommodations at moderate rates. Conveniences will also be found here for the tarpon fisherman, the house being located directly on the river. A number of boarding houses are also open to the public, where good accommodations can be secured at reasonable rates.

Parties who are looking for locations to settle, or investments, can be guided in their efforts by consulting either of the two reliable land agents located here. J. S. Singletary is one of the oldest residents of the county, and knows each parcel of land “by heart.” He is known as explorer, pathfinder and surveyor, and best of all, his statements are strictly reliable. W. C. Battey has brought many capitalists to Lee County, and has done a great work in the setting up and starting of new enterprises in the county. He gives his entire attention to these lines.

One of the successful enterprises of Fort Myers is the Seminole Canning Factory, established some years ago by W. P. Gardner & Son. The firm has a large canning plant, tin shop, etc., and makes a specialty of guava jellies and preserved guavas, supplying large grocery firms in New York, Philadelphia, and throughout the South. This firm is also at present engaged in putting in an electric light plant, and before the new year is ushered in the town will take a jump from kerosene lamps to electric lights.
One of the best weekly newspapers in the State is published here. It is a neatly printed eight-page paper, giving all the news of town and country. It is published by Isaacs & Stout, and edited by Philip Isaacs.

The stock business has always been an important one in Lee County, and lately, since the great demand for beef cattle has come from Cuba, the stock men have been reaping a rich harvest. The leading men in the business are James E. Hendry and Dr. T. E. Langford. They buy beef cattle, and own their own schooners, shipping hundreds of live cattle to Key West and Cuban markets each week.

The merchants keep as well-selected stocks of goods as can be found in any portion of the country. H. E. Heitman is one of the progressive business men of the town. He is now having erected the first brick house in the county, and will open up a first-class grocery store therein on January 1. He handles the choicest line of groceries on the southern west coast, and has established a reputation for his goods among the yachtsmen cruising along the west coast in the winter season. He conducts a first-class store, in connection with his grocery store, and he is also proprietor of the livery stable, where good teams and carriages may be secured.

W. R. Washburn conducts the Lightning News Depot, carries a full line of jewelry, silverware, etc., and is headquarters for the tarpon fishermen, keeping a supply of the best rods, reels, and lines for this sport. Captain Powell manages the Silver King Saloon and billiard rooms.

There are two drug stores. Dr. E. M. Williams, the proprietor of one, is also the photographer of the place, and his excellent landscape views are being sought far and wide. He has as fine a collection of views of Florida scenery as can be found in the State. There are also several blacksmiths, two meat markets, several restaurants, oyster saloons, the Gem tonsorial shop and
bath room. There are lodges of three secret orders, the Masons, Knights of Pythias, and Woodmen of the World.

The religious and educational welfare of the people is well looked after, there being Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, and Catholic Churches, and also two churches for the colored people. The public school is well attended, and is graded into four classes, with a good instructor in each class.

Another business that brings in a large revenue is the shipping of alligator and other hides, which are brought in from the Indian camps in the Everglades.

Men with an eye to business often wonder at the amount of business transacted in Fort Myers, as apparently there is no back country from which to draw trade. They overlook the fact that this town is the central trading point for a great territory lying along the Caloosahatchee River from Fort Thompson on the east and extending down the coast to Marco Island, covering altogether a territory by water of fully 150 miles, the greater part of which finds its natural trading at Fort Myers. As the county increases in population, the mail-order business from points along the regular steamer lines grows larger and larger, and is now looked upon as a regular feature by all the business men.
Every place in Florida claims to be the paradise of sportsmen, but cold facts and figures, and honest records show that Fort Myers can rightfully claim to be the leading tarpon fishing resort of the country, for more tarpon have been taken here with rod and reel than all other places in the State combined. Sportsmen have made yearly pilgrimages to Fort Myers from Europe and all parts of the United States, to experience the thrilling sensations of playing and landing with rod and reel, the gamest of all fish—the great silver king. Titled Englishmen, members of New York’s 400, and men of national reputation in politics, religion, literature, and mercantile pursuits have indulged in the sport and conquered the monster silver tarpon, and pronounced it the greatest sport in their experience. As many as four hundred tarpon have been taken here in one season with the rod and reel.

Besides the tarpon there are other great monsters like the sawfish, devilfish, jewfish, and sharks, and in the way of small fishing, many varieties of game fish are captured. The season lasts from January to June, but the best months for the sport are April and May, at which season the river and bays are alive with tarpon.

Every one has heard of or traveled on the St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers, and the scenery along these streams has been heralded over the wide world for its beauty. But how many have taken the trip up the Caloosahatchee River? Those who have pronounced the scenery far beyond

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H. O’Neill’s pleasure boat, from *Florida Times-Union and Citizen*, December 19, 1897.
that to be found along Florida’s other famous rivers, and a trip on the regular mail steamer, the
*Gray Eagle*, owned by the Menge Bros., is certainly one of the great delights of a Florida tour.

A few miles up from Fort Myers, Orange River, the most important tributary, enters the main
river. On this tributary are located some of the most magnificent orange groves to be found in the
State. A few miles up is the village and postoffice of Buckingham. Here for several miles,
bearing groves line the river on both sides. They stand there as proof that no freeze ever affected
them, for many trees are thirty feet high, and their spread of branches is fully that distance
across.

This section appears to be the home, par excellence, of the grapefruit, for nowhere else does it
thrive as it does here, and this fruit always commands the highest market price. Among the large
growers here are men who have made the citrus section famous, and the Orange River will, no
doubt, become famous for oranges. The soil along here is some of the richest to be found in the
State, and in addition to citrus fruit, sugar cane and other crops help to enrich the farmers. A
couple of hours ride up the Caloosahatchee brings the traveler to Caloosa.

This is the beginning of the great orange section on the river, and from here to Fort Thompson
the scene is an ever-changing one, with thrifty orange groves breaking its scenery at short
intervals on either bank. At Caloosa, A. M. McGregor, the Standard Oil magnate, is making
some extensive improvements. He has one hundred acres planted in orange grove, a large
plantation, and is conducting experiments in the growing of Cuban tobacco. He has also several
bearing orange groves in different parts of the county, and has a beautiful winter residence in the
western end of Fort Myers, adjoining the beautiful grounds and winter home of Thomas A.
Edison, the wizard.

From Caloosa to the thriving village of Alva, there is a succession of orange groves, including
some of the most productive trees in the county. At Alva there are a postoffice, school, church,
etc. It is the largest settlement on the river above Fort Myers. This section is growing very
rapidly, and a wonderful change has been going on, the heavy hammocks giving way for orange
groves, for the experience of the past has shown that it is a safe locality to grow citrus fruit.
There are thousands of acres of suitable orange lands in this section, and at the rate groves are
being set out, all the available lands will be planted in orange groves in a few years.

This condition of affairs continues up the river to Fort Denaud. Above Fort Denaud there are
not such large bodies suitable for orange culture, but the lands are rich and produce fine crops of
sugar cane, etc. At Fort Denaud there are a postoffice, general store, sawmill, school, etc., and
the village is steadily growing in population, and keeping pace with the rapid growth of the
section farther down. Along here the banks of the river are very steep, rising to a height of fifteen
to twenty feet.

Fort Thompson is the head of the steamboat mail route. There is a postoffice here and a store
near by. Fort Thompson lies in a beautiful green prairie, dotted all over with great oaks. The
grass is rich and nutritious, and stock grow fat upon it. It is one of the most picturesque spots
along this pretty country, and visitors should not fail to see it. Hunters will find the country
round about rich in game of all kinds.
Beyond Fort Thompson are the canals and chain of lakes forming the connection with Lake Okeechobee. Thirty miles south are the homes of the Seminole Indians, who are rapidly becoming civilized, and are living in peace and plenty, unlike their Western brothers, who refuse steadily to accept or ask any financial assistance from the Government.

Lee County claims a large share of the Gulf coast. . . . There is a chain of islands lying off the main land, forming inland sounds of salt water, where small steamers and sloops may navigate in safety.

The largest and most important of these is Sanibel Island. In the past two or three years this island has become a resort for winter visitors. On one side stretches the shell beach of the Gulf for fourteen miles, and on the other the still waters of Pine Island Sound. There are now two postoffices on the island, schools, churches, a good hotel and several boarding houses, Southern Express office, two general stores, etc. Wharfs extend out into the Gulf and two steamboat wharfs are on the sound side, the regular mail steamers from Fort Myers to Punta Gorda landing here daily except Sunday. Shell gathering, surf bathing, boating, fishing, clam and oyster digging are some of the things to amuse and occupy the people, but the principal and universal business is the growing of early vegetables—principally tomatoes—for Northern markets.
That bugaboo of Floridians, the “frost line,” is not dreaded here, for the frosts never settle on this island, and the vegetable grower commences to plant his first crop of tomatoes in August without giving a thought of winter or frosts. On the first of November, when the rest of the country is preparing for the approach of the blizzard, the Sanibelite begins shipping fresh, ripe tomatoes to market, shipping right up through the Christmas holidays, only stopping long enough to observe the anniversary birth of the Savior.

During the month of November just past, 1,034 crates of tomatoes were shipped North. These figures are from the books of the steamer St. Lucie. The last shipment in November consisted of over 300 crates. During December shipments will increase with every trip, until the capacity of the steamers will be taxed to their utmost. It is estimated that the crop will reach 150,000 crates. The Sanibel trucker usually grows two crops, one in the fall and another in the spring, and even the second crop is started to market several weeks in advance of the trucking points farther up the State.

Just across from Sanibel is Pine Island. The principal point on this island is St. James City, a great resort for sportsmen who love all kinds of fishing.

At the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, situated on the point of the main land, opposite the light house on the eastern end of Sanibel Island, is Punta Rassa. While there is little in the way of a town to be found here, this little place plays an important part in the welfare of the county and the country at large. For years it has been the cable station, from whence the cable crosses the Gulf to Key West and Cuba. All of the Cuban war news has to pass through this office, and in case of a break in the lines, the dispatches must all be “relayed” at this office. George R. Shultz has been in charge of this office for nearly thirty years, W. H. McDonald being his assistant. Mr. Shultz is also quarantine officer, customs collector for this sub-port, and the ever genial proprietor of the Tarpon House at Punta Rassa.

What recollection this old house brings up to the memory of the many well-known men of the world who have enjoyed its hospitality. The long string of names would include some of New York’s leading business men, United States Senators, etc. They come for the good treatment and the fishing, the like of which is not to be found around Florida’s 1,200 islands.

Below Punta Rassa are the islands of Estero and Mound Key, and on the main land is Estero Creek, where is located the Teed colony, known as the Koreshan Unity. Twenty miles south of Punta Rassa is Naples-on-the-Gulf, the pretty winter resort owned by Colonel W. H. Haldeman, proprietor of the Louisville Courier-Journal, of which Henry Watterson is editor. Naples lies directly on the open Gulf, with no islands intervening. A long dock extends out into the blue waters. Here is situated a well furnished hotel where guests enjoy surf bathing in winter, and fishing, hunting, etc., to their hearts’ content. Colonel Haldeman also has his private cottage here, and each winter comes here with his interesting family to rest and enjoy himself.

Ten miles below Naples is Marco Island, the beginning of the Ten Thousand islands that dot the Gulf. Here many thrifty farmers are growing early vegetables, sugar cane and tropical fruits for market. Captain W. L. Collier owns the largest bearing coconut grove at this place. He is also an extensive shipbuilder and merchant, and a couple of years ago built a handsome hotel on the
island. All the tropical fruits grow in great luxuriance on the island, the leading fruits being coconuts, alligator pears, sapodillas, bananas, and pineapples.

Old Tarpon House at Punta Rassa.

Photograph from *Yesterday’s Fort Myers* by Marian Godown and Alberta Rawchuck.
BOOK REVIEWS


This latest pictorial essay from Hampton Dunn is a fun-filled tribute to the city of Tampa from the days of the Spanish explorers to the present. Unlike Dunn’s earlier work, *Yesterday’s Tampa,* where the focus was primarily on the city’s buildings, the author has shifted his attention in this volume to the people and events which make up the social and economic fiber of Tampa’s past and present.

In the book’s seven chronologically-arranged chapters, Dunn has assembled a richly detailed selection of Burgert Brothers and Robertson-Fresh materials along with other photographs from his extensive personal collection. Many of these photos are being published for the first time in this volume. The prints are accompanied by brief narrative paragraphs filled with bits of Tampa's history, fact and lore.

The author makes no attempt to present a comprehensive history of the city, but he does give a warmly nostalgic look back to the days when Hollywood stars Colleen Moore and Rondo Hatton were Tampa school students, when couples went “spooning” on the Hillsborough River and when O. Falk’s sold women’s shoes at “$1.00 per foot.” His selection of photographs reveals where Tampans ate and played, how they worshipped and worked, and how they fought their wars and ran their government.

The first chapter, “Tampa Before 1900,” provides views of such long-vanished structures as the officers’ barracks at Fort Brooke and a rickety wooden footbridge at Jackson Street crossing the Hillsborough River. It also includes a copy of sheet music of the “Tampa Bay Hotel Gallop,” composed especially for the opening of that grand hotel. Clara Barton is glimpsed picnicking on the hotel grounds during a break from her nursing duties at the front during the Spanish American War.

Over the years visiting celebrities like Tyrone Power, Sally Rand, Jack Dempsey and Esther Williams made appearances in Tampa. Others such as Frances Langford and Billy Graham began their careers in the city. Dunn chronicles their presence in Tampa along with such well-known local personalities as broadcaster Sol Fleischman, *Tribune* cartoonist George White and Tampa’s own Miss America, Margaret Ekdahl.

Everyday life on the homefront during World War II is clearly illustrated by the photographs included in the chapter covering the 1940s. Off-duty servicemen gathered at the Hi-Hat Club in the DeSoto Hotel; the Red Cross trained classes of volunteer nurses aides; F. W. Woolworth’s downtown store promoted the war bond effort in its window display; and soldiers and citizens danced to Frank Sinatra records at a U.S.O. Club to unwind.
Railroad workers on the Plant System in the 1890s.

Photograph from *Tampa: A Pictorial History.*
More recent events like the opening of Interstate 75, the Buccaneers first win after 26 consecutive losses, and the record snowfall on January 19, 1977, illustrate that today’s news truly is tomorrow’s history.

Dunn’s appealing book provides a visual record of Tampa’s colorful past that will be satisfying to native, newcomer and even non-residents. Like a family photograph album, it is a book to be thumbed through again and again.

Jean Peters


*Florida’s Pinellas Peninsula* is a “coffee table” pictorial narrative about Pinellas County from its prehistoric beginnings to the present day. The author has a background in elementary school teaching and in television. She previously wrote a short pamphlet on the Don CeSar Hotel and short bicentennial biographies of famous Floridians.

Based mostly on photographs found in the Tampa Bay region, the book is heavily weighted toward the years since photography came into its own. Although the organization is generally chronological, subtopics within chapters range back and forth in years. This is especially true for the chapters devoted to creation of the many municipalities in the county. The book is approximately one-third text and two-thirds pictorial. The bibliography does not reveal the author’s sources; instead, it lists books available in the libraries of Pinellas County.

The text deserves criticism for its lack of balance, organization, accuracy and editing. Most of the deserved criticism can be illustrated by reviewing one chapter, “Pioneers, Fishermen, and Seminoles.” The heading page (p. 17) contains a picture of Zachary Taylor (unidentified) hunting Indians in Florida in the 1840s, and a picture of Osceola, the famous Seminole Indian chief. Osceola is also mentioned on pages 18 and 20, but not in the inadequate index. Taylor was in Florida in the 1830s, not 1840s, and neither picture is credited with an origin on the incomplete “Credits” page (p. 206).

In the same chapter, the territorial period is represented by a vignette of Senator David Levy Yulee. Although Yulee had nothing to do with Pinellas County, he was selected to exemplify the period because of his railroad project, which might have reached to St. Petersburg. Because the author does not separate the territorial and early statehood periods, Yulee is the only representative of both. The very first sentence misleadingly depicts Yulee as a leader in the 1820s, the start of the territorial period, even though he was hardly known before 1843.

The Yulee narrative reflects a problem of emphasis which can be seen in other chapters. The author's reliance on her previous work on famous Floridians creates much of the imbalance in the book. For example, in the period of exploration, she nicely depicts Juan Ortiz, but does not do so well with Hernando de Soto. In one boxed commentary (p. 13), Soto is named “deSoto,” “DeSoto,” and “De Soto.” In the same chapter, the author provides a circumspect narrative on the Tocobaga Indians, but then mislabels the pictures. She uses colored photos of murals in
Seminole Mall painted from Jacques Le Moyne’s sketches of Indians around St. Augustine and calls them Tocobaga.

June Hurley Young was faced with the problem of writing a Pinellas County history before the area became a separate entity in 1912. How much of Hillsborough County’s history to include would pose a dilemma for anyone. However, the author isolates Pinellas too much from the rest of Tampa Bay. For example, the famous Odet Philippe is depicted without regard to his business interests in Tampa. The “good living” he made might just as well have been from his pool parlors in Tampa as his citrus in Safety Harbor. For another example, the Spanish American War, so conspicuous in Tampa history, is completely omitted except for a small, boxed comment (p. 50).

The text is too imbalanced in favor of St. Petersburg and contains too many false or exaggerated statements. Examples include, “Florida was the supply depot of the Confederacy” (p. 7) and Pearl Harbor involved “sinking much of the nation’s fleet” (p. 150). The manuscript should have been better critiqued and edited before publication.

This book does not surpass earlier volumes on Pinellas County except as a pictorial. As such, its value lies in its visuals. Many fascinating photos are brought together for the coffee table
viewer. However, some pages are so crowded with unexplained photos that they look like they should be in a high school or college yearbook.

The picture “Credits” page is a small disaster. No credit is given for over 20 photos. Credit was usually given to a local library or society instead of the real origin of a photo. Some page numbers are listed up to four times, with no way of knowing which picture gets which credit. On occasion, a photo receives more than one credit.

Some picture choices are unfortunate. Why does the author use a photo of a present-day man and his wife dressed in Civil War garb to begin a chapter when a picture of a genuine Pinellas confederate, John Bethell, is readily available? Another photo, of a 1980’s Civil War reenactment group, has a false and misleading caption as though it were an 1860's picture. Besides such inadequate picture choices, the book also suffers from lack of appropriate maps to coincide with the many “then and now” geographical descriptions.

No pictorial history can be devoid of interest and fascination, even if Clio, the Goddess of History, should withhold her sponsorship.

Ernest F. Dibble.


According to McNally, the story of south Florida Catholicism begins in 1868, when the first group of religious women came to the region, when Cuban exiles arrived in Key West in significant numbers, and when parish life became somewhat stabilized. The crude, even rough frontier Catholicism, however, lacked a centralized diocesan structure and sufficient priests to serve the small, but growing Catholic population, giving laity unusual latitude in organizing and directing local religious activities. In many ways, the ethnically diverse pioneer Key West Catholic community (composed of blacks, Cubans, and whites) set the direction and tone for much of south Florida Catholicism for two generations thereafter. The opening of Florida to development in the early twentieth century, due in part to transportation improvements, altered the scale and range of Catholic concerns, but even through the 1930s the church retained its missionary character. It was a church poor in human and material resources, with a widely-scattered population and a defensive posture in facing the dominant Protestant culture of the region.

In McNally’s eyes, the episcopacy of Joseph P. Hurley, from 1940 to 1958, affected profound changes in the church’s structure and social stance. Although uncomfortable in human relations (even children made him nervous), Hurley brought pragmatic organization, assiduous acquisition of real estate, vigorous fundraising, and close management of staff and property to the church, and thereby imparted to south Florida Catholicism a sense of destiny and self-confidence it had previously lacked. The creation of the diocese of Miami in 1958 marked a new era in south Florida Catholicism. The longitudinal division (which, among other changes, separated the Tampa area away from its Atlantic south Florida connections) led to a bitter dispute between Hurley, now bishop of the diocese of St. Augustine, and Coleman Carroll, bishop (later
archbishop) of the newly-formed Miami diocese. Their quarrels over property allocations, responsibility for debts, and staff divided the church in Florida and saddled the new diocese with heavy financial burdens. Most important, argues McNally, the Hurley-Carroll split caused Carroll and his followers to abandon their ties to the church’s past interests and accomplishments in south Florida. Carroll focused attention on his administration and cultivated a myth of a new Catholicism in south Florida. Unfettered by history and tied only by land to its mother diocese, Miami now made its own history by rooting its actions in current concerns rather than in any understanding of the past.

As McNally shows so well, the new diocese had enough new concerns to occupy its time and talents. Especially troubling was the increasingly large and diverse Hispanic population crowding into south Florida. Indeed, the Cuban challenge, which involved assimilating large numbers of Cuban refugees who were Catholic in culture but distrustful of or at least indifferent to the church in practice, taxed traditional south Florida’s Catholicism spiritually and materially. Despite efforts to reach out to the new population through social service agencies and voluntary associations, the church never won its loyalties. Meanwhile, the church also struggled to serve the needs of its other constituents. In schools, vocations, and social outreach, the church failed to impose a uniform Catholic morality or identity. Regarding the Cubans at least, many continued to practice their popular religions, such as santeria, or adapted Cuban Catholicism to the new environment. Changing liturgical practices and attitudes toward lay roles in the church, among other influences wrought by Vatican II, further complicated the ministry in the ethnically diverse Miami diocese. The tensions between native and Cuban Catholics mirrored the unsettled state of south Florida Catholicism as it entered a new stage of development under Vatican II, new leadership, and a growing, but divided “Catholic” population.

Although McNally’s account hardly mentions Tampa, or other southern Catholic communities for that matter, his book’s importance transcends its limited geographical confines. By neatly charting the uneven course of Catholicism in the south Florida setting, McNally reminds us that the institutional development and social composition of the Catholic church, or any church, cannot be understood outside of their particular geographical and cultural environment. McNally’s seeming “bricks-and-mortar” emphasis on bishops and church building in fact helps to show how the physical construction of the church as an institution and the personalities of church leaders both shaped the character and focused the social vision of Catholicism. In those ways, his book speaks to Tampa’s history and present concerns as fully as it does to those of any American Catholic community. McNally shows, then, that the presentism of Coleman Carroll notwithstanding, history still matters.

Randall M. Miller


In contrast to its deep South neighbors of Georgia and Alabama, Florida has enjoyed a reputation as a progressive state. The restrictive economic and racial patterns that created the image of Dixie as a backward and repressive region also applied in Florida, but the Sunshine
State managed to avoid much of the scorn heaped upon its former allies in the lost Confederate cause. Part of the credit for this favorable perception must go to Thomas LeRoy Collins, who served as governor of Florida from 1955-1961 and guided the state with a moderate hand through a fractious period. Unlike gubernatorial contemporaries such as Orville Faubus of Arkansas who waved the flag of massive resistance against racial desegregation, Collins attempted to calm passions and obey the law of the land.

There was little in Collins’ background to suggest that he would handle civil rights issues differently than did other southern politicians of his generation. Born at Tallahassee in 1909, he grew up in a society where rigid racial segregation deprived blacks of their rights as first-class citizens. Collins did not question this prevailing system, but he was taught by his parents to treat blacks with kindness. During a period when lynchings were common in Florida and the rest of the South, paternalism, though no substitute for equality, was a humane alternative. His family also instilled in Collins a deep religious faith and a belief in free enterprise and public education, values that he held throughout his life. As a state legislator for some two decades, Collins joined the “business progressive” wing of the Democratic party, which sought to modernize the machinery of Florida government and promote economic growth in the state. His two terms as governor brought some needed reforms, especially in education, but failed most notably in the area of legislative reapportionment.

Tom Wagy correctly points out that the ultimate measure of Collins’ political leadership came in the area of race relations, the most troublesome issue of his time. The civil rights movement that gained momentum in the South during the 1950s thrust Collins into the center of the storm of controversy. Confronted by the Supreme Court’s monumental decision in support of school desegregation and faced with a mass social movement in which blacks boycotted buses in his native Tallahassee and engaged in lunch counter sit-ins throughout the state, Governor Collins responded cautiously. He did not challenge segregation but looked for ways to maintain it peacefully and legally. More concerned with the negative impact that racial strife would have on the economic climate of investment in Florida, Collins only gradually perceived that the struggle for civil rights was based on fundamental principles of fairness that could not be easily compromised. His attempts as governor to walk a fine line between what he saw as the extremes of racial agitation and reaction produced neither lasting peace nor justice throughout his administration. To his credit, Collins began to realize this failing by the time he stepped down from office, and thereafter he identified himself more closely with the morality of the civil rights cause. As head of the federal government’s Community Relations Service in 1965, he played a leading role in ensuring that Martin Luther King, Jr.’s march from Selma to Montgomery was completed successfully. On this occasion, Collins’ preference for avoiding violent confrontations did not interfere with the quest for equal justice. However, in 1968, Collins paid dearly for his association with Dr. King and the civil rights movement, as disapproving Florida voters defeated his candidacy for the United States Senate.

Wagy has written a well-balanced biography of Collins that reflects favorably upon his subject. Both fair and critical, he is adept at tracing the evolution of the governor’s thinking on the crucial issue of race. Philosophical growth and integrity are not easily found in a politician, but Wagy reminds us that sometimes a LeRoy Collins comes along who possesses both of these qualities.
Governor Leroy Collins in 1954.

Photograph courtesy of USF Special Collections.

*Seth Bramson*


Seth Bramson was preparing to write this book for the last twenty-five years. A major part of his life has been devoted to gathering photographs, facts and memorabilia from the unique Florida East Coast Railway—just for the love of it. Now we all can see the tangible evidence of his personal collection and work through the pages of this well done history of the men, Henry Flagler and Edward Ball, and their railway. This is a company that was not satisfied with just playing a leading role in the development of every major city on Florida’s East Coast; in addition it pushed on across the sea by rail to Key West and thence by railway ferry all the way to Cuba.

This story begins in 1882 and extends through 1984—more than 100 years! Included are booms, busts, corporate take-overs, hurricanes and major wars. Through it all the railway continued as one of Florida’s major boosters. Seth Bramson has done a fine job of capturing the
excitement and spirit of the times with a most informative and interesting text. Sprinkled throughout the storyline are the more than 400 photographs of rare engines, cars, stations, rail passes, maps of the line, post card views of the Flagler Hotels, steamships, advertisements, timetables, and much more memorabilia carefully selected to enhance the book. Perhaps some photographers would like to know more about who took some of the pictures and under what conditions. For myself, I was glad to get to see the photographs, many never before seen in print.

In addition, an eight part appendix is included complete with rosters of all locomotives, freight and passenger equipment. An unusual feature of the appendix is the track layout of stations, sidings, mainline and mileposts from Jacksonville to Key West. This is a fascinating peek at a corporation promoting itself while promoting Florida. It provides insights into a railroad not content to be an “also ran.” The men who created the railroad were free thinkers in everything from running trains out of sight of land to breaking up unions by the use of two-man train crews working eight hours per day (while other railroads were using three to five man crews for 100 mile “days”). Everyone interested in Florida’s kaleidoscopic past will find something of value within these pages. For a “ferroequinologist,” such as myself, this book is a must!

R. Randolph Stevens
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The South Florida Museum & Bishop Planetarium, located in Bradenton, offers views of Florida from the age of dinosaurs to the space age. The Museum features replicas of sixteenth-century buildings, including the home of Hernando DeSoto, and life-sized dioramas depicting Indian life in early Florida. The Museum also has a new Medical Wing with displays of early doctors’ instruments and a turn-of-the-century drugstore.

The Bishop Planetarium has a Spitz star projector which can depict the sky as seen from any point in the solar system. The Planetarium presents multimedia productions that change about every two months.

The South Florida Museum & Bishop Planetarium are located at 201 10th Street West, where U.S. Business 41 crosses the Manatee River in Bradenton. The facility is open every day except Monday. For more information, call 813-746-4131.

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The first issue of Gulf Coast Historical Review appeared in 1985. Published twice a year by the History Department of the University of South Alabama, the new journal features articles, documents, photographic essays and book reviews related to the history of the Gulf Coast area from north Florida to Texas. The 80-page first issue contains articles on early Mobile, Arcadian exiles in Louisiana and frontier days in Gainesville, Mississippi. Subscriptions for $10 a year are available from the History Department, University of South Alabama, Humanities 344, Mobile, Alabama 36688.

*****

The St. Petersburg Historical Museum seeks volunteers to serve as unpaid docents and tourguides for its facility located at 335 2nd Avenue, N.E., in St. Petersburg. Although no previous experience is necessary, applicants should be willing to make a commitment of at least two days a month. Trained tourguides, dressed in period costumes, demonstrate various pioneer skills to museum visitors. For more information, call Bob Cottrell at 813-894-1052.
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TAMPA BAY HISTORY

Published Semi-annually by
The Department of History
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
University of South Florida
Tampa, Florida

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Correspondence concerning subscriptions, contributions, books for review, and all other editorial matters should be sent to the Managing Editor, Tampa Bay History, Department of History, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620. (Telephone: 813-974-2807). ISSN: 0272-1406.

Manuscripts from potential contributors should be typed and double-spaced with footnotes, also double-spaced, placed at the end and prepared in conformity with the style used by the journal. Manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope with enough postage.

The subscription rate is $10 for one year and $18 for two years. Single issues and back files are available. Printed semi-annually, in the spring/summer and fall/winter.

Tampa Bay History disclaims responsibility for statements made by contributors.

Tampa Bay History is indexed in Historical Abstracts, America: History and Life.
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COVER: A family in Pinellas County (then part of Hillsborough County) in the 1890s. Photograph courtesy of Pinellas County Historical Museum.
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JANET SNYDER MATTHEWS ................................ Historian
JOHN F. McCARTHY .......................................... Sarasota County Historian
HARRIS H. MULLEN .......................................... Trend Publications
TRAVIS J. NORTHCUTT, JR .................................... Human Resources Institute, 
                                                  University of South Florida
ANTHONY PIZZO ................................................ Historian
SAM RAMPELLO ............................................ Hillsborough County School Board
CATHY SLUSSER ............................................. Manatee Village Historical Park
TERRY A. SMILJANICH ....................................................... Attorney

JACKIE WATSON ....................................................... Pioneer Florida Museum
NOISE POLLUTION

"We rise to inquire if there is another city of 25,000 inhabitants in the United States or anywhere else outside of hades where locomotives are allowed to race up and down the streets night and day blowing and screeching as if the devil was after them, running nervous people crazy, and making the most stoical curse the memory of the man that boiled the kettle and first discovered the power of steam? How many sick people they kill in a year and how many people they drive distracted there are no statistics to show, and if there were, the company would give the keeper of them a free pass to have them changed.

"One engine in particular has a whistle that gives forth a wild, fierce, agonizing, nerve-racking, sleep-destroying scream and the d--n fool that runs it has got it down to such a fine point that he can modulate it to suit the hellishness of his whim. Starting in with a tremendous, God-forsaken hopeless wail that sounds to a man starting out of sleep like the cry of a woman in distress, it rises to a scream that freezes the blood and has no parallel in heaven or earth or hell. The nearest approach to it is probably the 'ki, yi e e' of a Mark Hanna republican when the devil sticks his red-hot pitchfork through him to toss him into the furnace. From that, it assuages down to a deep, awful, harrowing moan that sounds as if the world was dying.

"We have not killed a man since the dawning of the new century and we hope to get through this century without staining our hands with blood. But if the men who call themselves councilmen and sit up in the city hall and 'chaw tobacco, spit on the walls, swap yarns and vote appropriations for detective work and charter lobbying, don't do something to the 'blamed cuss' that runs the switch engine from Tampa to Ybor, we will not be answerable for the result." Tampa Advance News, quoted in St. Petersburg Times, June 29,1901.
"AU REVOIR"

"The present week has witnessed the departure for their northern homes of practically the last of our winter visitors .... St. Petersburg entertained more visitors last winter than ever before, and they will still be greater next winter - and the next - and the next, as long as people who like a balmy climate in winter continue to inhabit the northland. A number who have spent winters here have remained and will become fixtures. Still more secured lots before leaving and will hereafter spend winters in their own southern home. Hotel, cottage and room facilities were largely increased last year, but the difficulty of securing quarters was just as great as ever. More facilities still should be provided this year or disappointment among visitors will result again next season.

"St. Petersburg has climate and sport and pleasures and health for all, and the house room must be provided. All visitors will return next winter and bring more with them. Until then St. Petersburg bids them - not good bye, but au revoir." St. Petersburg Times, May 4, 1901.
"There is a coterie of goggled-eyed, gasoline scented, motorcycle fiends from Tampa, who frequently on Sunday afternoons transform the peaceful tranquility of Plant City’s Sabbath streets into a bedlam of foul smells and hideous noises. The city authorities should not permit the use of the streets as a race course, and if there is no ordinance designed to regulate this unmitigated nuisance, the council should see to it that one is passed. We make this complaint without regard to the rights of the cows that are so flagrantly trampled upon in their afternoon strolls over the city." Plant City Courier, quoted in Tampa Morning Tribune, January 5, 1911.