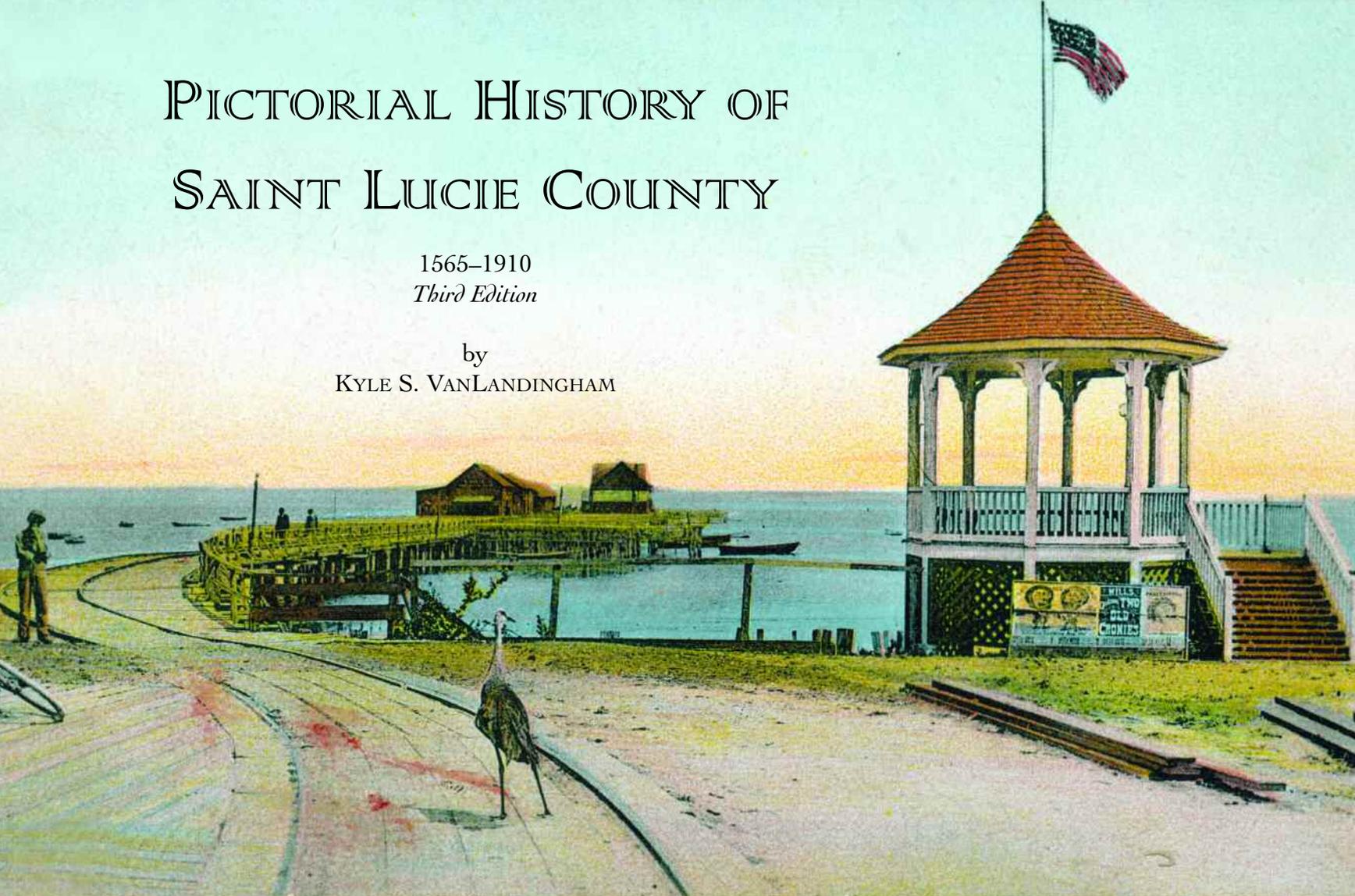


PICTORIAL HISTORY OF SAINT LUCIE COUNTY

1565-1910
Third Edition

by
KYLE S. VANLANDINGHAM



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History written by:

Kyle S. VanLandingham

Published by the St. Lucie Historical Society,

Brad Culverhouse, President.

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*On the cover: "Fort Pierce, Fla. Bandstand and City Pier,"
postcard from the author's collection.*

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This book is dedicated to the Florida Photographic Concern, Harry and Lowell Hill, Proprietors. Fort Pierce and Saint Lucie County owe much to this family for their part in the preservation of the history of the surrounding areas through their work in photography.

Lloyd G. Hill and his wife settled on the St. Lucie River in 1880 raising pineapples and bees. Photography was his hobby and before 1900 he moved to Fort Pierce and established the Florida Photographic Concern. His son Harry, left, and grandson Lowell, right, followed him in the photographic business. Lowell married Merle Thompson in 1916, and they had a daughter, Catherine, seated.



1565–1865

A salt water lagoon of the Atlantic Ocean stretches along the east coast of Florida from the Haulover Canal north of Titusville to Jupiter Inlet on the south. Known as the Indian River, this body of water has witnessed the human drama unfold along its shores for several centuries. Another waterway, only a narrow stream at its source, begins a few miles west of Fort Pierce and flows south to join the ocean at St. Lucie Inlet, some twenty miles distant. This is the St. Lucie River, from which St. Lucie County takes its name.

Four centuries ago, the inhabitants of present-day St. Lucie County were the Ais Indians. The Ais were a people whose life was closely associated with the Indian River, their main food being fish and oysters. A warlike tribe, skilled in the use of bow and arrow, the Ais proved to be uncooperative subjects for the Spanish missionaries. To the south of this tribe were the Jeagas and Santa Luceros, both small groups. After 1700 the native Indian population of Florida declined rapidly, due mainly to the introduction of European diseases.

The first permanent European settlement in Florida came in 1565 when Pedro Menendez de Aviles founded St. Augustine. In the fall of that year, Menendez proceeded south from St. Augustine to Cape Canaveral where he destroyed a French barricade and took some forty to eighty prisoners. Following this military action, the group headed south twenty leagues from the Cape, marching on the west side of the Indian River, then known as Rio de Ais or Ais River. Arriving south of Sebastian River in November, 1565, Menendez met the Ais Indian leaders, negotiated a treaty, and constructed a camp. Capt. Juan Velez de Medrano was placed in command and given fifteen days supplies. Menendez then took a boat and left for Havana with fifty Spanish soldiers and twenty French prisoners.

The Sebastian fort soon ran low on supplies. About 100 of Velez's 150 men then mutinied and headed south, marching to St. Lucie Inlet, where they found the inlet too wide to cross. Velez soon arrived by boat and convinced the men not to go farther south. He then sailed out of the inlet heading for Havana but the first day out he intercepted a ship coming to Sebastian, carrying the much needed supplies.

Stocked with supplies, Velez sailed six leagues south to Jupiter Inlet, where he built Fort Santa Lucia on the north side, December 13, 1565. The patron saint of the day was St. Lucie of Padua and the fort was named for her. The mutineers were brought down from St. Lucie Inlet and all remained at the fort throughout the winter. They withstood an Indian attack, but in March, 1566, the men again mutinied, captured a ship, and set out for the West Indies. The guilty were later captured by Menendez and faced courts martial in St. Augustine.

Although the name St. Lucie was first given to the fort which was situated on the north end of Jupiter Inlet, it was later applied to the river which still bears the name, some six leagues north. A Spanish map, dated 1605, refers to the St. Lucie River. Other early maps show it as Rio de Santa Cruz and River of Luz.

Spanish efforts to fortify the coast along the Indian River Lagoon and to Christianize the Indians were largely unsuccessful throughout their years of dominion over Florida.

In 1696, Jonathan Dickinson and his party were shipwrecked on the coast at Hobe Sound. Held captive by the Jeaga Indians, they were eventually allowed to proceed north up the coast to safety. In

1807 the Spanish authorities granted some 2000 acres to James Hutchinson on the island which was named for him. Hutchinson planned to engage in hog farming but died within the year, his family returning to the United States.

By the early 1800's, a new tribe of Indians, the Seminoles, had moved into Florida from Georgia and Alabama. When Florida was ceded by Spain to the United States in 1821, efforts were underway to remove the Seminole Indians to the western territories. The Second Seminole War began in 1835 and the U. S. Army began to establish military posts throughout the peninsula. Lt. Col. Benjamin Kendrick Pierce, commander of the 1st Regiment of Artillery, and brother of future President Franklin Pierce, proceeded down the coast in late 1837 with a detachment of troops. The soldiers moved to the west side of the Indian River on the morning of January 2, 1838 and stopped at a spot four miles south of Indian River Inlet, at a bluff some 10 to 15 feet above the water. Accompanying Col. Pierce was Jacob Rhett Motte, an army surgeon who gives the following account of the founding of Fort Pierce:

“We there established ourselves; first by pitching our tents on a narrow esplanade between the river and the bluff, which rises perpendicularly behind us; next by erecting



Seminole Indian woman and child. The Indians camped on the outskirts of town and moved from campsite to campsite trading hides and buckleberries to settlers. Note the dug-out in the wagon.



A Seminole family, the women in traditional clothing and beads, pose for a portrait.

a block-house upon the top of the bluff. Being pretty much like all other block-houses in Florida except that this one was built of palmetto logs, we deemed it worthy of the title of fort, and the distinction of a name, it was therefore dubbed Fort Pierce, after our worthy commander.”

The fort was located near an Ais Indian mound with a natural spring of fresh, pure water. Fort Pierce’s occupants had no worries as far as food was concerned. Motte speaks of the

“many bonitas, redfish, grouper, sheepshead, bass, trout and myriads of other kinds unknown elsewhere: of the finest flavor and large dimensions, generally two to three feet in length, as will feast a regiment. As for the oysters, six are a comfortable meal for one person, easily obtained, which after removal from the shell measured six to seven inches in length by two or three in breadth. A whole army might be subsisted here on produce of the river if a fish diet agreed with them and not fear of exhaustion of supplies. We all began to grow fat on this good living. Every day our clothes became tighter.”



Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Kendrick Pierce, Commander of Fort Pierce, 1858.



A replica of the military Fort Pierce. This fort was for three days the headquarters for the Army of the South. Troops were dispersed from this fort to points west and south. The building to the left of the block house is the hospital. The buildings were of pine and sabal palm logs and were roofed with sabal palm fronds. The actual area is about the size of a city block and was located one mile south of the present Saint Lucie County Courthouse on South Indian River Drive.

On January 8, 1838, Col. Pierce left with most of the regiment for up-river, leaving Maj. Kirby in command at Fort Pierce. By January 14, Gen. Jesup and his staff had arrived along with some 1000 men in the Second Dragoons under Col. Twiggs.

Fort Pierce remained in operation until August 25, 1842, when the war's end caused its abandonment. During its occupancy two future Civil War generals were stationed there: William T. Sherman of the Union, and Joseph E. Johnston of the Confederacy. Perhaps the most notable incident occurring at Fort Pierce took place in March 1841, with the arrest of Chief Coacoochee, also known as Wildcat.

After the war ended in 1842, Congress passed the Armed Occupation Act which took effect on August 4, 1842. According to the Act, any head of family or single man eighteen or over, was able to claim 160 acres of land, south of Gainesville and Palatka. The law provided that he live on the land for five years and put at least five acres under cultivation.

After passage of the Act, a number of hardy pioneer families settled along the Indian River Lagoon. Land

claims along the river extended from Cape Canaveral on the north to Jupiter Inlet on the south. Most of the settlers resided south of Indian River Inlet, on the west side of the St. Lucie Sound, near the site of the recently abandoned Fort Pierce.

Among the leaders of the colony was Col. Samuel H. Peck, banker and physician from Augusta, Georgia. Peck had the only frame house in the settlement, having had it built at Savannah, Georgia and brought down on a schooner to Florida. The remaining settlers lived in more primitive dwellings, built of pine logs with roofs of palmetto leaves. In 1845, Peck sold out to Capt. Mills O. Burnham, who was the first to grow pineapples at Ankona Bluff. Other prominent pioneers in the colony were Ossian B. Hart, future governor of Florida; Dr. Holbrook, Charleston physician; John S. Hermans; Major William F. Russell and his brother-in-law, John Barker. Also present were a number of carpenters, sailors, slaves, and at least two consumptive gentlemen who had come to Florida for their health.

The pioneer settlers lived a life of primitive abundance. The land was full of wild game and the river abounded in fish. So no one lacked the basic necessities of life.

News came from the outside world when schooners sailed in from St. Augustine, New Smyrna, and Key West. A settler named Dr. Weedon was the proprietor of the buildings at the old Fort Pierce, which he used as accommodations for newly-arrived families. On the night of December 12, 1843, a fire started in the fort's kitchen, and due to the northwest winds, it spread and soon destroyed the remaining buildings of the fort. A large number of supplies had been stored in the fort as well as the possessions of some recently arrived families. One of these, Capt. Camfield, lost his remaining property when a violent squall hit the river and sank a barge carrying his possessions.

In the summer of 1844, the settlers opened the inlet at Gilbert's Bar, a narrow neck of land separating the river and lagoon, nearly opposite the mouth of the St. Lucie River. Fresh water from the St. Lucie River had been accumulating in the Indian River Lagoon for a considerable period of time and ocean tides flowing into the lagoon from Indian River Inlet north of Fort Pierce were not sufficient to restore the needed salinity to the water. Salt water fish were disappearing from the Indian River Lagoon and the oyster beds were being affected. The settlers constructed a ditch across Gilbert's Bar, but left a sand heap on the east side to

keep the water from coming through that night when they slept nearby. However, during their sleep the wind changed and blew from the west, causing the water from the river to sweep across the sand heap and break through, almost killing the sleeping men. Nevertheless, the settlers had achieved their objective and in the words of pioneer William Peck:

“The bar remained open for many years and the work accomplished all that had been desired. The detested grass vanished, land and water game returned, and fear of malaria was soon dissipated.”

In 1844, one year before Florida became a state, St. Lucia County was formed. Generally known as St. Lucie County, it was formed from giant Mosquito County which had been created in 1824. St. Lucie's boundaries started at Cape Canaveral on the north and went south as far as Hillsboro Inlet. The western boundary was west of the Kissimmee River.

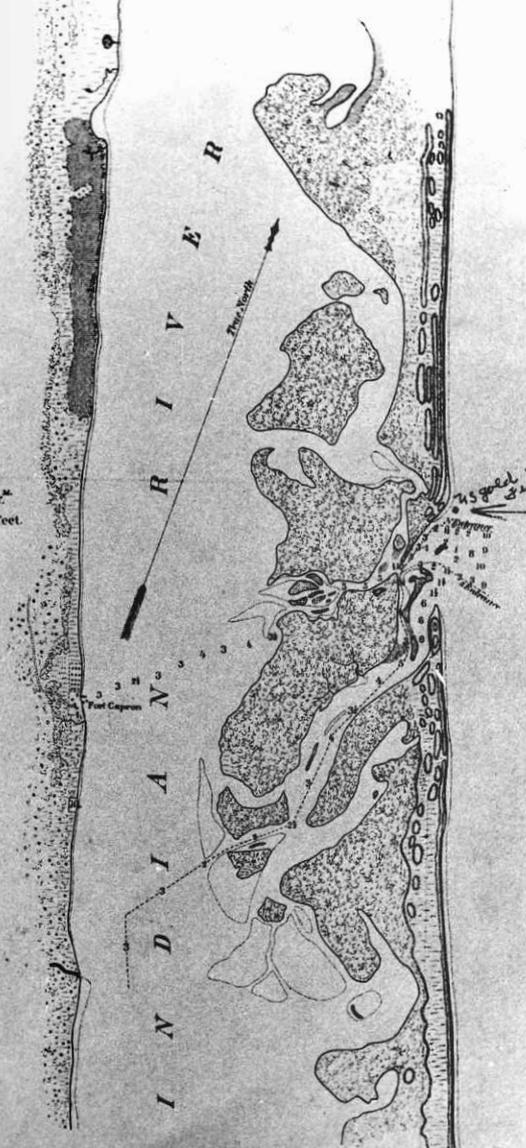
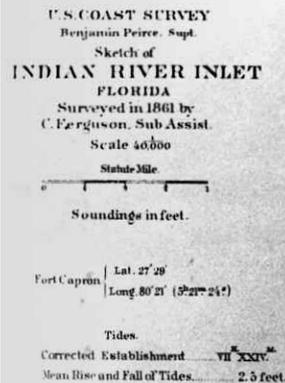
The Armed Occupation Act settlers thrived until July 1849, when trouble arose with the Indians. A small party of Seminoles stopped at the house of William Russell at present-day St. Lucie. At first they appeared peaceful, but later in the day when Russell was in a



The remains of a coquina rock fireplace of an Armed Occupation Act settler. Carved into the fireplace is the date 1844. The settlers grew pineapples, bananas, corn, sweet potatoes, citrus fruit and other crops.

field with his close neighbor and brother-in-law, John Barker, the Indians opened fire. Barker was finished off when the Seminoles stabbed him to death with their knives, but Russell escaped after being shot in the arm. He called out the alarm and his family and Mrs. Barker quickly fled in two boats and headed upriver. Russell then joined Caleb L. Brayton and D. H. Gattis, and proceeded south in a boat to warn the other settlers. They were fired on by the Indians as they fled the shore, but they were successful in securing a schooner to carry Russell and the remaining colonists north to St. Augustine. The schooner made contact with and rescued a daughter of Major Russell and eight slaves who had gone ashore from their boat and walked up the coast to the Cape Canaveral lighthouse. Brayton and Thomas Morrison remained to check out the damage, found Barker's body, the Russell and Barker homes ransacked and Gattis' house burned to the ground. The two then headed north on the Indian River Lagoon, overtaking the other boat which contained Mrs. Russell and her family and Mrs. Barker and escorted them to New Smyrna.

U. S. Coast survey of Indian River Inlet showing location of Fort Capron, present location of St. Lucie Village.



The War Department ordered Lt. Ripley, who was stationed at St. Augustine, to proceed down the Indian River and protect the remaining settlers. Little remains of the Armed Occupation Act colony today. On Indian River Drive, south of Fort Pierce, a coquina rock fireplace, built on the property of Capt. William Davis, still stands. The fireplace was located on the gable end of a palmetto-covered cabin, the cabin having long disappeared. Carved into the fireplace is the date 1844.

Another Seminole War failed to materialize in 1849, but a military post by the name of Fort Capron was established in March 1850. Named in honor of Capt. Erastus Capron, 1st Artillery, the fort remained in operation until June 14, 1859. Fort Capron was located several miles north of Fort Pierce, at the present location of St. Lucie. Extending from Fort Capron to Fort Brooke (Tampa) on the west coast was a military road known as the Capron Trail, for many years the only road connecting the east and west coasts.

With military protection at Fort Capron, some of the settlers who had left in 1849 returned to their homes along the Indian River Lagoon. Major Russell and his family came back and he continued to serve as Inspector

of Customs and operated a store and trading post. The 1850 census of St. Lucie County shows 139 people living in twenty-two dwellings. Of this number, twenty-seven were slaves. The following numbered individuals were heads of families in St. Lucie County in 1850:

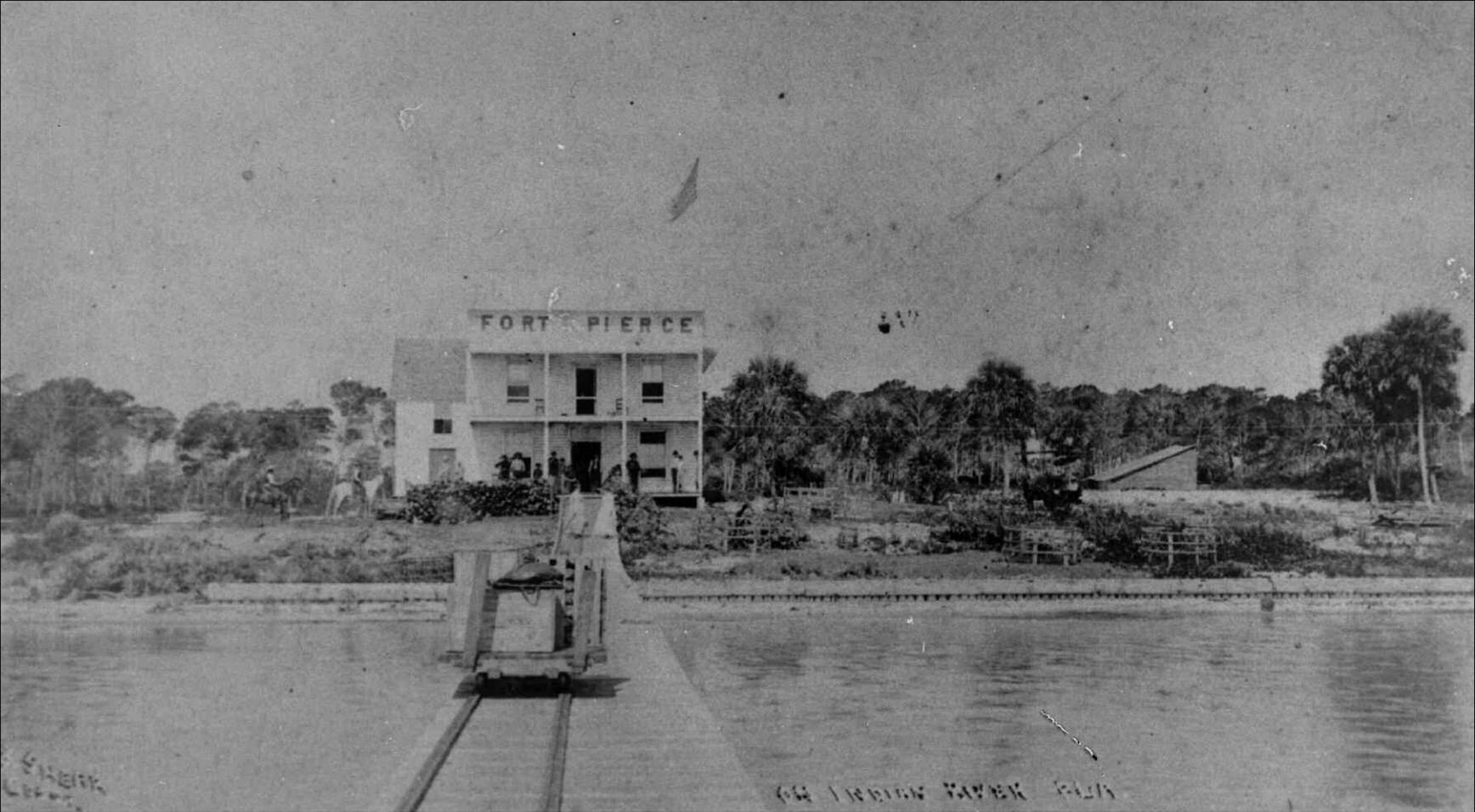
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Douglas Dummitt, Pilot | 11. Theodore Meade, Clerk |
| 2. N. C. Scobin, Merchant | 12. Daniel Sinclair, Merchant |
| 3. John S. Hermans, Judge of Probate | A. W. Montgomery, Clerk |
| 4. Vincent Bowers, Laborer | Eli English, Butcher |
| 5. D. H. Gattis, Farmer | 13. Isaac Tyson, Butcher |
| Manual Navarro, Ship Carpenter | 14. Elizabeth Bevins |
| William Holdrin, Mail Carrier | 15. Thomas Jordan, U. S. Army |
| 6. Mills O. Burnham, Gunsmith | 16. James Totten, U. S. Army |
| 7. William Russell, Inspector of Customs | 17. Allen Lorod, U. S. Army |
| 8. Peter Johnson, Farmer | 18. James W. Russell, M.D., U. S. Army |
| 9. James Lightbourne, Mariner | 19. Andrew Merchant, U. S. Army |
| 10. Caleb C. Brayton, Mail Contractor | 20. Hoyt Palmer, Sgt., U. S. Army, and 48 soldiers in U. S. Army |
| Charles Johnson, Mail Carrier | 21. Hellen Murn |
| | 22. Charles Craig |

The census taker noted at the bottom of the page: "The Inhabitants of this County were driven from it on acct. of the Indian hostilities and only a few of them have as yet returned."

In 1855, St. Lucie County's name was changed to

Brevard. Encompassing the same area as the older county, Brevard had as its county seat Susannah, generally known as Fort Pierce. The post office was Indian River. According to Ives' military map of Florida, dated 1856, the following family names are shown along the east coast, starting at the site of Fort Pierce, and going south to St. Lucie Inlet: Brayton, Barber, Merrill, Holdrin, Herman and Morrison.

About 1858, the family of James Paine arrived at Fort Capron. The Paines became prominent in the area, Mr. Paine serving as County Judge of Brevard during the late 1860's. With the end of the Third Seminole War, in 1859 Fort Capron was abandoned. The Civil War was to arrive in two years but as the nation was divided and thousands killed, the settlers along the Indian River Lagoon lived a relatively peaceful existence. Blockade runners used the lagoon as a haven from Federal ships and in 1865, Confederate Secretary of War, John C. Breckenridge sailed down the river during his escape from Union troops. Just north of Titusville his boat was hauled over to the Indian River. Breckenridge's party sailed south as far as Jupiter Inlet, went on to Lake Worth and finally arrived in Cuba.



The Hogg Store was built by Captain Benjamin Hogg about 1882-84.

The building was owned by an oyster cannery for a time and was purchased by Peter P. Cobb for use as a general store in 1896.

1865–1900

With the close of the Civil War, a new era began for the settlers in lower Brevard County. On December 4, 1868, a post office was established at St. Lucie with Joseph Smith as postmaster. Subsequent postmasters were Wm. B. Davis in 1870, Thos. L. Paine in 1871, James S. Bell in 1878, and James Paine, Jr., in 1882. The Paines operated a boarding house at St. Lucie during the 1870's and James Russell, son of Maj. Wm. Russell, lived nearby at the site of Fort Capron.

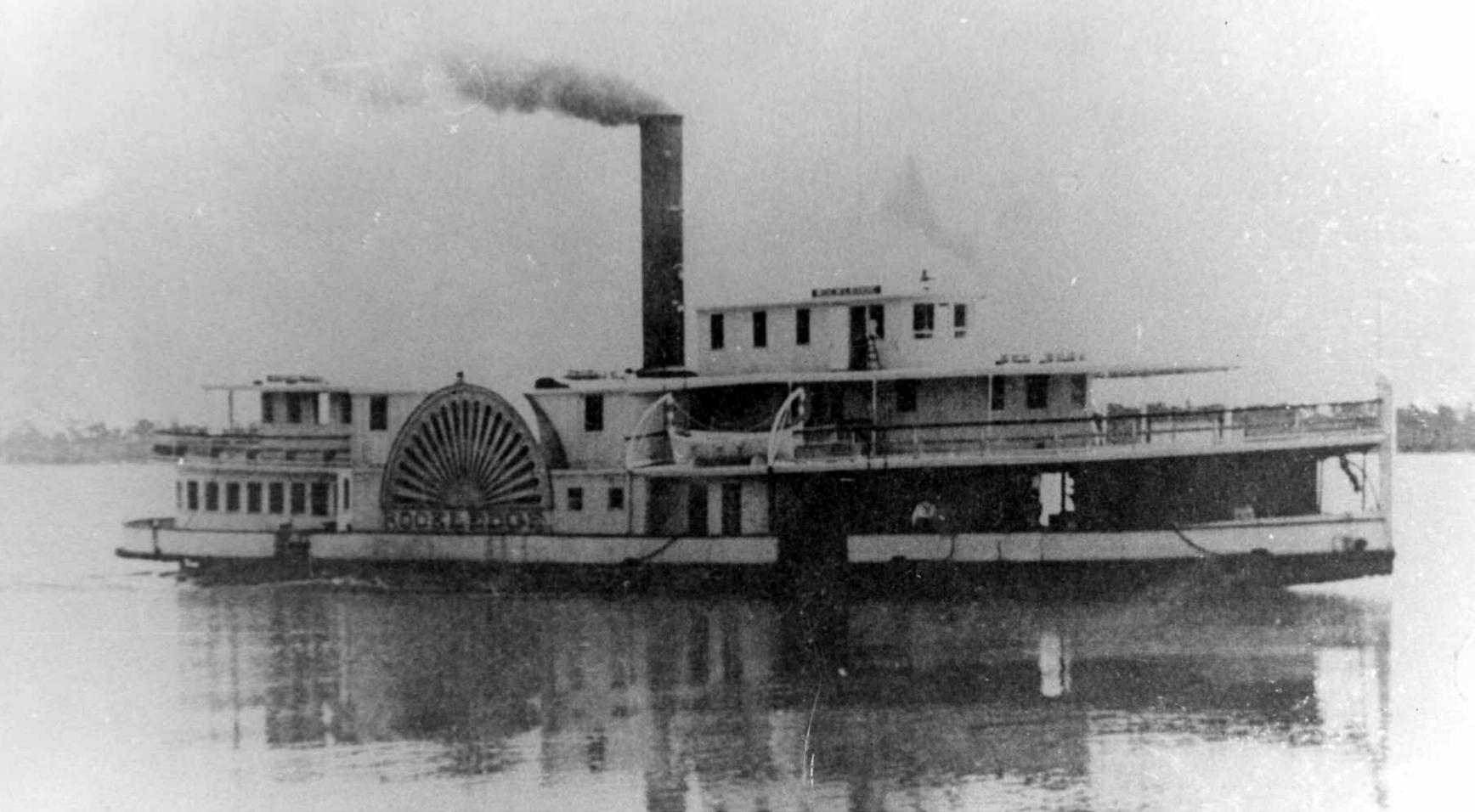
In 1871, Alexander Bell, a native of Hamilton County, came with his family to the Indian River area, first settling at the site of Fort Pierce, where he operated a trading post. Bell later moved several miles north, homesteading 160 acres at Taylor Creek. In 1872, Archibald Hendry moved to the east coast and was followed in 1880 by the Reuben Carlton family. Both were from Manatee County and raised beef cattle on the open range. The cattle industry was of paramount importance in Florida after the Civil War and many ranchers owned thousands of head. The lower Kissimmee River valley was ideal for the raising of beef cattle and the settlement of Basinger, located on the

Kissimmee River at the western edge of Brevard County, was the center of activity for many cattlemen. With the steady growth of west central Florida during the 1870's a number of ranchers moved their herds to the Basinger area, their cows ranging as far east as Fort Pierce. Among these cattlemen were John Pearce, William Alderman, William Underhill, Jeremiah Walker, and Eli Morgan. Morgan eventually settled at Bluefields and the Carltons at Ten Mile. The Hendrys first stopped at Hendry Creek, east of Okeechobee, but later moved to Fort Pierce.

In August 1879, the family of Capt. Benjamin Hogg sailed down the Indian River Lagoon and landed at Fort Pierce with the intention of setting up a trading post near the site of the old fort. Several years later, the Hoggs purchased land at the present site of Avenue A and Indian River Drive and built a large two-story building to house their store. Capt. Hogg's ship traded in the West Indies for products that were sold in Jacksonville for goods to stock his store in Fort Pierce. In 1886, the Hoggs sold their store to a company of men from Connecticut. This group set up an oyster cannery with Mr. Julius Tyler as President. The area around the building became known as Cantown. Two



Cobb's Dock and Oyster House under construction at the present site of the Fort Pierce Marina.



Trade boats ran up and down the Indian River from Jacksonville to Miami and were the only mode of transportation along the river except by horse or ox team. This is a side wheeler named the Rockledge.

men who first were employed at the Hogg store and later by the Florida Canning Company were T. J. O'Brien and Peter P. Cobb. The canning company sold out to Mr. Cobb in 1896. A general merchandise store was established in the building and Mr. Cobb operated this business until a few years before his death in 1943. A bachelor, originally from New York, Cobb moved to Fort Pierce in 1883 on the advice of his friend, Milton Card, an early pineapple grower.

In 1879, Capt. Thomas E. Richards and his family settled along the Indian River Lagoon south of Fort Pierce, where they homesteaded land. Capt. Richards named the property Eden, and in 1880 build a large two-story house. The Richards were pioneers in the pineapple industry, Capt. Richards bringing pineapple slips from the Keys. They were first planted on Hutchinson Island, but due to the richness of the soil, they died. They were soon brought over to the mainland where they flourished in the sandy soil supplemented with fertilizer.

The pioneers depended on the trade boats to provide them with merchandise in the days before the local store was anything more than a trading post. Capt.

Alfred Michael and Mr. Walter Kitching were both owners of trade boats which operated on the Indian River. Food, clothing, and building supplies were offered to the pioneers when the boats landed. Shelves containing all sorts of household items lined the walls of the Kitching boat, even a dressing room was provided.

The county of Brevard had no courthouse until the mid-1870's when one was constructed at Lake View, a settlement located near Lake Marian in west-central Brevard County. With the addition of the lower part of Volusia County to Brevard in 1879, the county seat was moved to Titusville.

A writer for the *Southern Sun*, a Palatka newspaper, made a trip to the lower Indian River region in 1885 and his impressions were printed in the January 7, 1886 issue. The writer, known as the Rambler, was greatly impressed with the large number of fish in the Indian River:

“The great wonder of the St. Lucie country is its enormous shoals of mullet and other fish. Long trails of them, often a half a mile in length, [can be seen] wending their way

up and down the river. These trails are usually from 50 to 80 feet wide, and make the water boil and bubble as if a great fire was raging beneath the waters of the river.”

Speaking of the oyster industry as being very profitable, he said:

“They are sold on the spot at 50 or 60 cents per bushel or two dollars per barrel. It is supposed that over 20,000 bushels are taken every season.”

Old Fort Capron was described by Rambler thus:

“Round about the fort, which is on [James A.] Russell’s land, is not cultivated as it should be; yet from an old time planting there are almost 25 acres covered with orange trees, sternly disputing possession of the soil with the encroaching forest growth, but often outstripped and overshadowed by massive trees.”

The shoreline was thick with pineapples and he remarked that:

“The Northern tourist, when he first gazes upon it can scarcely believe his own eyes, so unlike is it to anything of the kind that he has ever witnessed.”

The mid-1880’s saw the Indian River region continue to grow with the arrival of more families. A post office was established at Fort Pierce, January 29, 1888, with Peter P. Cobb as postmaster. Mr. Cobb operated the post office in the general store that he later owned. The name Cantown gradually disappeared and Cobb’s store was the center of activity in the Fort Pierce settlement. Directly north of Fort Pierce was Edgartown, a village located along present-day North 2nd Street and north of Moore’s Creek. It was named for Edgar Bowman, grandson of W. G. Lagow, an early settler there. Through the efforts of Thomas C. Bass in 1885, Edgartown obtained a post office which received the name of Bass. Cornelia, wife of T. C., served as postmistress. The Bass post office operated for only a brief period, being superseded by the newer one at Fort Pierce.



Peter P. Cobb, first postmaster in Fort Pierce in 1888, was a merchant, part owner of Pioneer Drug Store and benefactor of many people in Saint Lucie County. He liked to give candy to each child who came into his store.



Delivery wagon for Cobb's General Store.



P. P. Cobb's store. Right, inside the store.

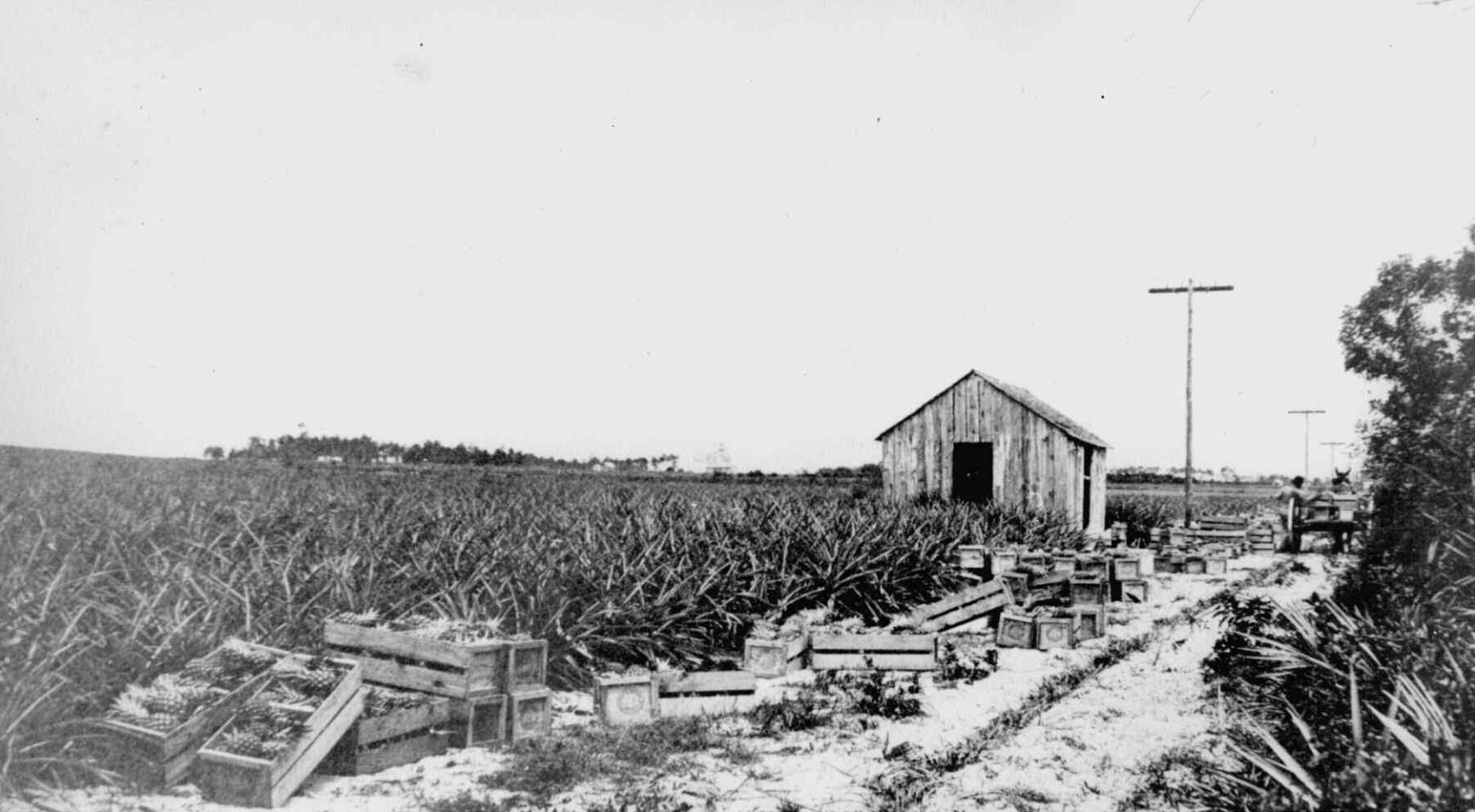
The family of E. C. "Ned" Summerlin arrived at St. Lucie in early 1888. The Summerlins were engaged in the fishing industry at St. Lucie. Joseph Jackson Keen and his brother James Keen settled at Fort Pierce in 1887. They planted pineapples for P. P. Cobb and Henry Olmstead. Frank H. Fee came to Fort Pierce from Melbourne in 1887 and established a hardware and undertaking business. Charles T. McCarty, a lawyer from Iowa, arrived with his family in 1888, first settling south of Fort Pierce, then moving to Edgartown. The A. C. Dittmar family and Stephen Jennings family also came to the area in 1888.

The pineapple industry rapidly became the leading industry in the region. Capt. John Miller of Wisconsin came to Florida in 1884 and purchased twenty acres from Will Richards, son of Capt. Thomas E. Richards, at Eden. Miller was very active in the pineapple business and was also a boat builder. An article in the *Indian River Advocate* reports that on February 17, 1892, a meeting of pineapple growers was to take place at the home of Capt. Thomas Richards with the express purpose of organizing a pineapple growers association.

Facing the Atlantic Ocean at present-day Pepper Park



Red Spanish is the variety of pineapple ready for harvest in a typical pineapple field. The house is the Goldsmith home on Orange Avenue.



The Koblegard Plantation at Viking, now Indrio. The sand trail was to become North U.S.-1.



McCarty's pineapple packing house on South Indian River Drive, six miles south of Fort Pierce.

[Form 1800.]

COPY OF WRECK REPORT.

Name of Refugee *Ship Henry Johnston*
 at *San Juan del Rio*, District No. *7*

Date of disaster *Oct 28th*, 1887.

1. Name of vessel.	1. <i>S. S. Panama</i>
2. Rig and tonnage.	2. <i>Barbante's Steamer, about 1300 tons.</i>
3. Hulling-part and nationality.	3. <i>Spanish, but not known.</i>
4. Age.	4. <i>Supposed about 12 years.</i>
5. Official number.	5. <i>not known.</i>
6. Name of master.	6. <i>Luciana Matena</i>
7. Names of owners.	7. <i>not known - Caballer, & Co. agents,</i>
8. Where from.	8. <i>New York</i>
9. Where bound.	9. <i>Havana & Central America</i>
10. Number of crew, including Captain.	10. <i>not known.</i>
11. Number of passengers.	11. <i>Between 400 and 500 -</i>
12. Nature of cargo.	12. <i>Sard and general merchandise.</i>
13. Estimated value of vessel.	13. <i>Insured for \$100,000 [£]</i>
14. Estimated value of cargo.	14. <i>Insured for \$75,000. [£]</i>
15. Exact spot where wrecked.	15. <i>Opposite Fort and Station San Juan</i>
16. Direction and distance from station.	16. <i>N.W. 26 miles</i>
17. Supposed cause of wreck, (specifying particularly.)	17. <i>Gross negligence, or willfull default</i>
18. Nature of disaster, whether stranded, sunk, collision, &c.	18. <i>Stranded</i>
19. Distance of vessel from shore at time of accident.	19. <i>400 yards</i>
20. Time of day or night.	20. <i>about 3 A.M.</i>
21. State of wind and weather.	21. <i>heavily calm, moonlight, but cloudy &</i>
22. State of tide and sea.	22. <i>about high water. smooth.</i>
23. Time of discovery of wreck.	23. <i>About 6 A.M. - daybreak.</i>
24. By whom discovered.	24. <i>P. Kregel. Also by Kregel, brother.</i>
25. Time of arrival of rescue ^{rescue} at wreck.	25. <i>P. 30 A.M. Oct 28th</i>
26. Time of return of rescue ^{rescue} from wreck.	26. <i>3 P.M. Oct 31st</i>
27. Was life-boat used?	27. <i>Not used</i>
28. Number of trips with life-boat.	28. <i>no life-boat used at land</i>
29. Number of persons brought ashore in life-boat.	29. <i>no required</i>
30. Was surf-boat used?	30.
31. Number of trips with surf-boat.	31.
32. Number of persons brought ashore with surf-boat.	32.
33. Was life-raft used?	33.
34. Number of trips with life-raft.	34.
35. Number of persons brought ashore with life-raft.	35.
36. Time of launching boat or raft, (about.)	36.

Copy of Wreck Report.



Path and building of House of Refuge. These stations were built 20 to 50 miles apart on the Florida East Coast.

was the House of Refuge, constructed by the U.S. government in 1886. One of a string of such buildings operating along the coast to aid shipwrecked victims, the House's first keeper was James Bell. Known as the Indian River Inlet House of Refuge, one of the earliest keepers was Henry A. Archibald, who was paid \$400 a year plus provisions.

The first school building in Fort Pierce was located at Taylor Creek, midway between Fort Pierce and St. Lucie. With palmetto thatched walls and roof, the school was run by a Mr. Hurst, who taught the Bell and Russell children. About 1888, a more substantial frame building was constructed in the Edgartown area with Mr. Hodge serving as principal. Mrs. Elizabeth McCarty, wife of Charles T. McCarty, served as schoolteacher in the early 1890's, succeeding Miss Lucy Beville.

Not until the late 1880's were churches formally organized in the Fort Pierce area. Occasionally, traveling ministers came down the coast on sailboats and would preach to gatherings of settlers. Two Baptist missionaries arrived at Fort Pierce in the 1880's and stayed at the home of James Bell, at whose home services were

held. A Baptist congregation was formed in 1890 with the following charter members: S. F. Gore, Pastor; R. G. Hood, Sunday School superintendent and teacher; Mrs. Elizabeth Carlton, Mrs. Lucy Beville Carlton, Cora Hood Dittmar, Mrs. Annie Jesse Brown, Thomas Beville, Mr. and Mrs. James Bell, Mrs. A. S. Lassiter, Mrs. Mary Richards, Col. and Mrs. E. C. Summerlin, Mrs. Elizabeth Beville, Sally Carlton Boykin, Mr. Edwards, and Mr. H. B. Middlebrooks, music leader. A. C. Dittmar and A. Hood furnished \$100 for building materials and the church was soon constructed on the corner of 4th Street and Avenue A. Later the building was improved with the addition of a steeple and belfry.

The Methodists had their first services in Fort Pierce about 1889 in the schoolhouse which was located on the southeast corner of Avenue D and North 2nd street. Two ladies, Mrs. Elizabeth McCarty and Mrs. Jennie Jennings, were instrumental in the founding of the First Methodist Church. A building was constructed in 1895, facing east, towards the railroad tracks, located at present-day 620 North 4th Street. After population began to shift from Edgartown to the area a few blocks south, a new structure was build just south of Moore's Creek, on the west side of North 2nd

Street. The first pastor of the Methodist Church was the Rev. W. T. Lane.

As early as 1891, local Episcopalians held lay reader services in the home of Frank Tyler. Later, services were held at the First Baptist Church. The first members of the Episcopal Church in Fort Pierce were the Clarence Summerlins, Frank Tylers, Wallace T. Harbin, and Judge Lewis. The parish register shows the first confirmation taking place February 26, 1896. Bishop William Crane Gray helped organize the church, known as St. Andrew's.

Steamboats began to ply the Indian River during the late 1880's. Perhaps the most famous steamer was the *St. Lucie*, built in 1889 in Wilmington, Delaware. A stern-wheeler, 122 feet in length, 24 feet wide, the ship was owned by the Jacksonville, Tampa and Key West Railway. The 110 foot *St. Augustine*, and 130 foot *St. Sebastian*, were also built in Delaware for the railway. These steamers sailed the river from Titusville to Jupiter. The *Georgiana*, 185 feet in length, was built in Palatka in 1888.

To the right: First Baptist Church, oldest organized church in Fort Pierce with 19 charter members.





The St. Lucie docked at Cobb's Dock.

The steamers remained for only a few years, for the Jacksonville, St. Augustine and Indian River Railway Company, owned by Henry M. Flagler, began construction down the coast. In January 1894, the train arrived at Fort Pierce. Flagler's railroad soon received a new name, the Florida East Coast Railway.

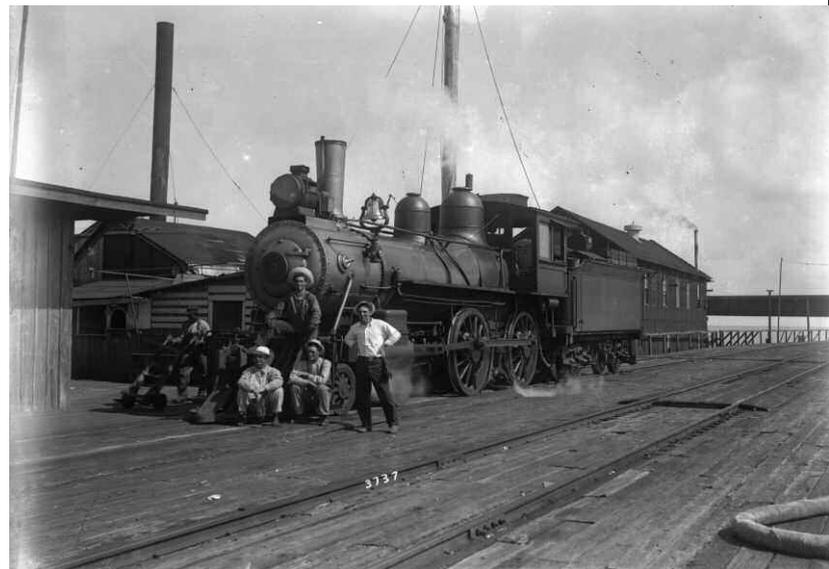
The 1890's saw the arrival of more families to the Fort Pierce area. Major B. Daniels settled at Viking in 1892, and planted pineapples in that area. Jens Helseth, a Norwegian, came to the same section in 1895 and owned 80 acres on which he grew pineapples. The Nelsons, Standes, and Ericksons also settled in the Viking area, known as such because of the preponderance of Scandinavian residents. This small village, located north of St. Lucie was a pineapple center of some importance. Charles A. Gibbons also settled in the same area about 1898.

Farther north were Oslo, Vero, Quay, Orchid and Sebastian. As early as 1865, August Park settled in the Sebastian River area and lived for a time at Barker's

To the right: Work crew constructing track for the railroad when it arrived in Fort Pierce in 1894.

Bluff. Later, he was followed by Gottlob Kroegel, who also settled at Barker's Bluff. The town of Sebastian was originally named New Haven, but Sylvanus Kitching changed it to Sebastian in 1884.

South of Fort Pierce on the sand ridge east of the savannas, several communities came into existence. Ankona, named for the Ankeny family, was located just north of Tibbals, now Walton. L. P. Tibbals built the home "Beulah Plantation," and the community nearby





Fort Pierce was the division point for the Florida East Coast Railway and the crews changed here while water and coal were being added to the train. The old round house was just off the tracks.



Engine #5 of the Florida East Coast Railway and crew.



Each foreman was assigned a certain number of miles of track for repairs. The workers were referred to as section gangs.

was first known as Tibbals. After a hotel was constructed in that area in the early 1900's the name was changed to Walton, after Izaak Walton, a noted fisherman. Rev. Leicester Sawyer came to Tibbals in 1898, arriving the same year as W. H. Lennard. St. Paul's Episcopal Church was built in Tibbals (Walton) in 1898. Other pioneers of Walton were Harry Jennings, Thomas Waters, Will Harris, Mrs. Eliza Luce, first postmistress; Miss Gertrude England, the Webster brothers, and the Charles Taylors.

At Eden, a Congregational Church was organized November 11, 1894, with the Rev. S. F. Gale of Jacksonville presiding. Besides the Richards and the Millers, others settlers of Eden were C. A. Robinson, J. H. LeTourneau, and J. G. Wey. In 1896, R. R. Ricou arrived at Eden with his family. He entered the commercial fishing business and at one time owned eight fish houses along the coast from Titusville to Key West.

South of Eden was the community of Jensen, named after John L. Jensen, a pineapple grower who settled there in 1883. Other pioneers in the Jensen area were John Sorensen who came in 1889, Charles H. Racey in 1890, Frederick William Willes in 1893, W. L. Fredericksen in 1893, Thomas Hellier in 1898, and

Frank C. Munch in 1898.

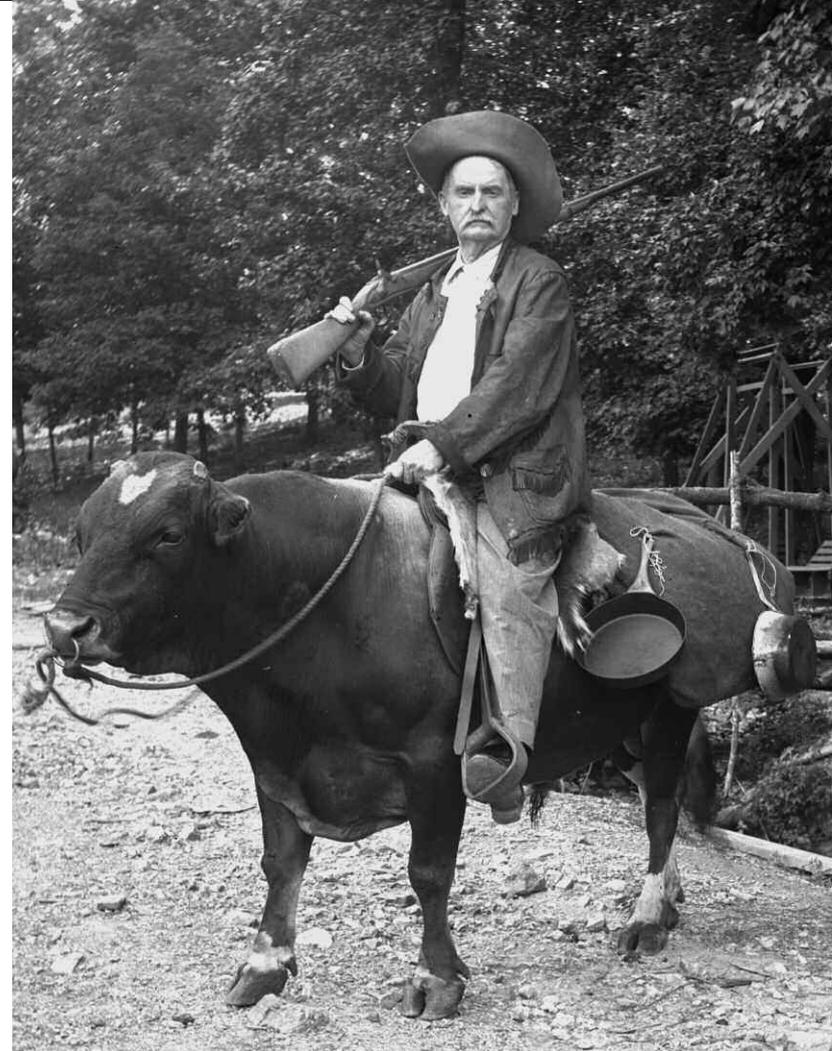
Back at Fort Pierce, the 1890's saw extensive growth. George Saunders came from Michigan in the early 1890's. William Tucker came about the same time and operated the Edgar House Hotel at Edgartown. His son Gosper ran the family-owned saloon in downtown Fort Pierce. Adrian M. Sample came to Florida in 1893 and entered the pineapple and citrus businesses. He also owned the Indian River and Lake Worth Fish Company. During the 1890's, two cattlemen moved to Fort Pierce and built homes in the downtown area: Keightly B. Raulerson and David Lee Alderman.

In 1895, Fort Pierce's first doctor arrived, Clyde Phillips Platts, a Midwesterner who had come to Florida for his health. For ten years he was the area's only physician. In 1898, R. L. Goodwin and George T. Backus arrived. Mr. Backus was a professional boat builder.

The community of White City, five miles south of Fort Pierce, received its name from the White City section of the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. The early settlers were primarily Scandinavians, with

Danes predominating; also present were northerners and native-born Floridians. Among the early families were Jorgensen, Cameron, Gustafson, Larsen, Knudsen, Sorensen, Nelson, Fransen, Orrel, Diederich, Hansen, Sullivan, and Howard. The first boy born in the Danish colony at White City was N. W. "Bill" Jorgensen, born in 1896.

In the back country of southern Brevard county, about thirty miles west of Fort Pierce, was the settlement of Fort Drum. Founded as a military post in 1850 and abandoned by 1860, the area was virtually uninhabited until the early 1870's when Judge Henry L. Parker moved there. Parker operated a trading post, selling goods to neighboring cattlemen and Seminole Indians. Most Fort Drum people were cattlemen and included Judge Parker's stepson, Henry A. Holmes; also Rev. Joel Swain, James Morgan, William Beecher, and Streaty Hair.



To the right: William Tucker, born 1840, owned the Tarpon Bar. He kept his bear in the pen behind the saloon, but most children were not allowed on that side of the street.



Home of William Tucker, "Promised Land" at Ten Mile Creek. He was an old soldier and the sign over the gate read "This is the home of an old soldier, if you are hungry come in and be fed, if you are tired come in and rest."



Two views of South Indian River Drive.



Home of the George Backus family on Indian River Drive.



Captain Saunders came to Fort Pierce from Michigan in 1895 and built this home on the site of the present day Fort Pierce Cemetery. Ray, Banty and Perry, sons of Captain Saunders, became prominent in the history of Fort Pierce.



Dr. C. P. Platts and family, 1901. Dr. Platts is holding his son George. Mrs. Platts is holding their daughter, Helen, and is seated with her twin sister, Mrs. Vina Hogg.



This wagon holds Katy Godfrey, Nina Butt Buchanan, and Clyde Killer. A Seminole Indian is holding the oxen's reins.



Moore's Creek was a haven for boats during a gale or hurricane.



The Mouth of Taylor Creek where it emptied into the Indian River Lagoon north of Fort Pierce.



Capt. W. S. Pitts (1825-1904), a veteran of the Mexican War. He and his dogs lived in a tent at the corner of Spruce and Magnolia (Avenue F and North 4th Street).



PORT PIERCE FLA.
JAN. 26TH 1902.

Ten Mile Creek, a good fishing and camping country in the early 1900's.



Capt. W. S. Pitts (1825-1904), a veteran of the Mexican War. He and his dogs lived in a tent at the corner of Spruce and Magnolia (Avenue F and North 4th Street).



Ten Mile Creek, a good fishing and camping country in the early 1900's.

1900-1910

Shortly after the opening of the twentieth century, Fort Pierce was incorporated as a city. On February 2, 1901, the male registered voters met and organized a town government. A charter was drawn up and the following names appear on the charter as qualified voters:

James E. Andrews	A. P. Edge	J. B. Merriwether
W. P. Andrews	Ed Edge	T. J. O'Brien
D. L. Alderman	W. H. Farmer	C. P. Platts
R. L. Brown	D. L. Futch	K. B. Raulerson
H. S. Bronson	A. D. Ford	H. B. Summerlin
H. B. Burke	R. W. Godfrey	A. M. Sample
J. T. Beville	J. T. Grey	F. C. Stetson
W. J. Bass	J. W. Greek	M. Starling
L. L. Carlton	W. T. Hayes	S. P. Smith
D. S. Carlton	J. C. Hendry	S. J. W. Scott
W. W. Carlton	G. S. Hart	F. M. Tyler
C. Carlton	G. C. Houston	W. J. Tucker
W. B. Cross	W. H. Harris	G. S. Tucker
J. A. Depew	S. W. Jennings	J. Tucker
R. Dunnam	J. J. Keen	J. B. White
A. C. Dittmar	H. I. Klopp	F. Roylance
W. B. Davis	A. B. Lowery	M. C. Burney
S. A. Davis	R. W. Lennard	

The first officials of Fort Pierce were: A. C. Dittmar, Mayor; Y. W. Hogg, D. L. Alderman, L. L. Carlton, P. P. Cobb, F. M. Tyler, Aldermen; D. S. Carlton, City Marshal; and H. I. Klopp, City Clerk. The city of Fort Pierce also included within its boundaries the area known as Edgartown.

In 1901, the Fort Pierce schoolhouse was destroyed by fire, so a new two-story structure was built on the east side of North 2nd Street. St. Andrew's Episcopal Church was built on the west side of North 2nd Street, south of Moore's Creek, in 1902. Among the families moving into the area at the turn of the century were those of Robert R. Gladwin, William E. Tylander, Charles M. Horton, and W. R. Jackson.



Fort Pierce School in 1908 located on the east side of Pine (North 2nd Street).



Fort Pierce School is in the center. Cobb's store and dock and Sample's fish house are to the right.



Looking south on Pine Street (North 2nd Street). On the left is Lowery Jewelry Store, Faber Bakery and Hotel – Ice Cream Parlor in SW corner of Hotel. Across street, left to right: Raulerson Grocery, Pioneer Drug Store, Fee and Stewart Hardware Store – on the second floor was the telephone exchange.



Pioneer black residents at their home. In the early days, North 9th Street was the business center of the African American community, but it later moved to Avenue D, west of North 7th Street.



The Buckhorn Saloon was owned by the Carlton brothers, Wright and Reuben. The interior shot shows Wright Carlton, on left and a brother. The saloon was located on the southwest corner of Pine Street (South 2nd Street) and Orange Avenue. It is believed to be the first block building in downtown Fort Pierce and was standing in 2006. Note the "Colored Bar" on the right side of the store, evidencing the Jim Crow segregation that existed in Florida until 1964.



Area north of Moore's Creek in the early 1900's.



Palmetto Avenue (Avenue A) from the railroad tracks looking west. On the left are the City Hall, Hendry House and the First Baptist Church; on the right side of the street is East Coast Lumber.



Taken from the coal chute looking north. In the foreground at the left is the passenger station, at the right is Tarpon Bar. The church with the steeple in the background is First Methodist.



From the coal chute looking east, the street on the left heading toward the river is Orange Avenue and the other street going north and south is Pine Street (2nd Street). The center house is the F. M. Tyler house and on the right is the old Fort Pierce Hotel.



First County Commissioners, 1905: W. R. Hardee, J. F. Bell, K. B. Raulerson, Paul Kroegel, and R. D. Holmes.

For a number of years, sentiment had been growing among the people of lower Brevard County for the legislature to create a new county, in order that government might be closer to home. In 1905, the state responded by creating St. Lucie County. The boundaries of the new county were Sebastian River on the north, St. Lucie River on the south, with Osceola County on the west. The county was over thirty miles wide, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Osceola line. The act creating St. Lucie County went into effect July 1, 1905, and the first officials selected were: K. B. Raulerson, Fort Pierce; W. R. Hardee, Jensen; Paul Kroegel, Sebastian; R. D. Holmes, Fort Drum; and Frank Bell, White City; as County Commissioners. Also chosen were Robert Lennard as Sheriff; Dr. C. P. Platts, Superintendent of Public Instruction; R. G. Hardee, Tax Assessor; Mr. Dutton, Tax Collector; J. E. Fultz, Clerk of the Court; and Ned Summerlin, Game Warden. A giant celebration was held in Fort Pierce, July 4, 1905. Speeches were delivered by C. T. McCarty and Claude Olmstead and a parade marched through the downtown area. W. L. Coats served as Grand Marshal with local girls representing various counties throughout the state.



Home of J. E. Fultz, the first Clerk of Circuit Court. He moved from Spruce Bluff, a pioneer settlement on the west side of the Saint Lucie River opposite Port Saint Lucie Country Club and the old Pruitt Fishing Camp.



Fort Pierce Jail was also used by the county. At the extreme right is Bob Lennard, the first Sheriff of Saint Lucie County.



Parade celebrating the formation of Saint Lucie County in 1905. Above, Mr. W. L. Coats, Grand Marshal, leads the parade on a horse. The bandstand is located at the foot of Palmetto Avenue (Avenue A).



The float pictures above are on Palmetto Avenue (Avenue A).

Fort Pierce had two newspapers in 1905. The *Fort Pierce News* was founded in 1903 by Charles S. Emerson. In 1905, the *St. Lucie County Tribune* was started by A. K. Wilson, the first issue coming out on July 21, 1905. The first page tells of the celebration of the previous July 4th. Also on the first page is an article concerning the St. Lucie Ice and Electric Company and its plans for constructing a modern ice factory and electrical plant. Stockholders of the ice company were listed as R. R. Ricou, T. J. O'Brien, A. M. Sample, K. B. Raulerson, H. E. Crooks, C. L. Faber, Jr., and G. S. Tucker. Another article tells of the first meeting of the school board and establishment of three school districts. The nine schools in the county were located at Sebastian, Narrows, Quay, Viking, Eldred, Jensen, Tantie, and two schools at Fort Pierce. Also on the first page is a mention of W. J. Tucker's 65th birthday party and the imminent arrival in Fort Pierce of a new doctor, W. E. VanLandingham.



To the right: The freight depot is on the left and the ice plant is at the right. These buildings are on the north side of Palmetto Avenue (Avenue A) at Depot Drive.



Taken from the coal chute, looking north, Depot Drive is in the foreground with Hendry and Goldsmith Clothiers' building in the center. Two churches are visible: First Methodist, top left, Saint Andrew's Episcopal, top center. Fort Pierce School is in the top right.



Pine Street and Palmetto (North 2nd Street and Avenue A), southwest corner with coal chute in the background about 1905. Pioneer Drug is on the corner, next the Raulerson building and Fred Fee's home. The Stetson house is at the right facing Palmetto.



Visiting and local bar in Saint Lucie County, September 1905. Seated is Circuit Judge Minor Jones. Standing to the extreme right is Otis R. Parker, Sr. Second from right is Sheriff Robert Lennard; third from right is Charles T. McCarty, fourth from right is Judge James Andrews of Fort Pierce and fifth from right is State Attorney Jones of Orlando.



First Grand Jury in Saint Lucie County in 1905. Standing, left to right: T. J. O'Brien, Pete Robinson, A. W. Hogg, Lee Faber, A. M. Sample, William Fee, W. P. Lassiter, David Lee Alderman, H. E. Crooks, William E. Tylander. Seated, left to right: A. B. Lowery, John C. Jones, State Attorney; J. G. Coats, Gosper Tucker, K. B. Raulerson, E. C. Summerlin, Henry A. Holmes, Harry Jennings, E. T. Traynor, and W. S. Musgrove.

In 1906, the Fort Pierce Board of Trade was established. The first meeting was held April 25, and the constitution was adopted June 1. Officers were C. T. McCarty, President; J. E. Andrews, Vice President; F. E. Fee, 2nd Vice President; F. L. Hemmings, Secretary; and H. G. Bronson, Treasurer.

On May 9, 1909, the First Presbyterian Church was organized. Services were held at the Woodmen of the World Hall on North 2nd Street until the church building was completed at the corner of Orange Avenue and 8th Street in 1915. There were 32 charter members, the first minister being the Rev. H. W. McCombs.

In 1910, the major industries in St. Lucie County continued to be cattle, pineapples, and fish. The back country west of Fort Pierce was the home of thousands of head of beef cattle. K. B. and Frank Raulerson operated the East Coast Cattle Company. Other prominent early cattlemen were the Carlton brothers – Wright, Charles, Lin, Dan and Perry. Nathan Holmes and B. E. Alderman worked for the East Coast Cattle Company and later became independent ranchers. The Hendrys and Bells also raised cattle.



The intersection of Orange Avenue and Pine Street (North 2nd Street). Cobb's Dock is in the background.



The Fort Pierce Improvement Club located on the east side of Pine Street (North 2nd Street) south of Moore's Creek. This building was owned and built by the Woodmen of the World organization. Court and civic meetings were held there. This building was used as a library and all school entertainment was also held there. In addition, the Presbyterian Church also met there for five years.



Billy Bowlegs III (1862-1965), a well-known Seminole hunter, guide and personality was one-fourth African American. He was originally named Cafe-bat-co and was of the Snake clan of the Seminoles. In his later years he rode in the Sandy Shoes Cattlemen's Day Parade in Fort Pierce.

Pineapples covered the sand ridge that stretched the length of the county from Sebastian to Jensen. On the riverfront at Fort Pierce were a number of fish houses and packing plants. At the foot of Avenue A, on Cobb's Dock, was Ricou and O'Brien, wholesale and retail fish dealers. Other fish houses were owned by A. M. Sample, Dick Whyte, and Walter Peterson. Mackerel, mullet, and kingfish were brought in by the boatload, cleaned and packed in barrels with ice, then hauled on a track down Avenue A to the railroad freight cars. The fish were then carried up the east coast to a number of large eastern cities.



Ricou and O'Brien Wholesale Fish Dealers building located at the end of Cobb's Dock.



Looking west from Cobb's Dock. The track in the street was used to haul barrels of fish from Cobb's Dock to express cars on the railway siding. The cars were pulled by horses, or hand pushed, and were iced as they passed the ice plant at the far right.



Looking west on Palmetto Avenue (Avenue A). The bandstand on the left was an entertainment center for the city of Fort Pierce.



Pine Street (2nd Street) looking south. Buildings on the left are Atlantic Hotel, Nesbitt Dry Goods Store, Allman House, Crozier Realty. Domed building in the background is the County Courthouse. Buildings on the right side of the street, right to left, are Fee's Hardware and Undertaking, Pioneer Drug Store, Raulerson's Grocery, Jackson-Luce-Gladwin Hardware.



Saint Lucie County Court House constructed in 1909.

Fort Pierce was the business and commercial center of the county. The Bank of Fort Pierce was established in 1903 by Fred Fee. The St. Lucie County Bank was started in 1908 at Jensen, but with the steady growth of Fort Pierce, the bank was moved there in December 1910. The cash and books were placed on the cashier's boat and brought up the Indian River to the bank's new home.

A two-story red brick courthouse was constructed at Fort Pierce in 1909, giving the county an attractive permanent structure for its government.

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About the Author



Kyle S. VanLandingham is a native of Fort Pierce and a sixth-generation Floridian. He holds a B.A. degree from Maryville College in 1973 and a J.D. degree from Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, in 1976. During summer vacations from college, Kyle worked as a volunteer at the St. Lucie County Museum and authored the *Pictorial History of Saint Lucie County*. In April 1976, he was made a life member of the St. Lucie Historical Society in recognition of his authorship of that book. He was President of the St. Lucie Historical Society, 1977-78; a Director of the Florida Historical Society, 1984-87; President of the Tampa Historical Society, 1996-97; and was Editor of the journal, *Sunland Tribune*, from 1991 to 1997. He received the 1981 Florida History Award from the Peace River Valley Historical Society and is the author of six books and numerous historical articles on Florida history and genealogy. Kyle was Okeechobee County Attorney from 1978 to 1987 and now resides in Denver, Colorado.

St. Lucie Historical Society, Inc.

Established November 18, 1952

P.O. Box 578

Fort Pierce, Florida 34954-0578

(772) 461-8020

www.stluciehistory.org

The Society has the following particular purposes:

Promote public interest in and study of the history of the St. Lucie County and of the East Coast of Florida.

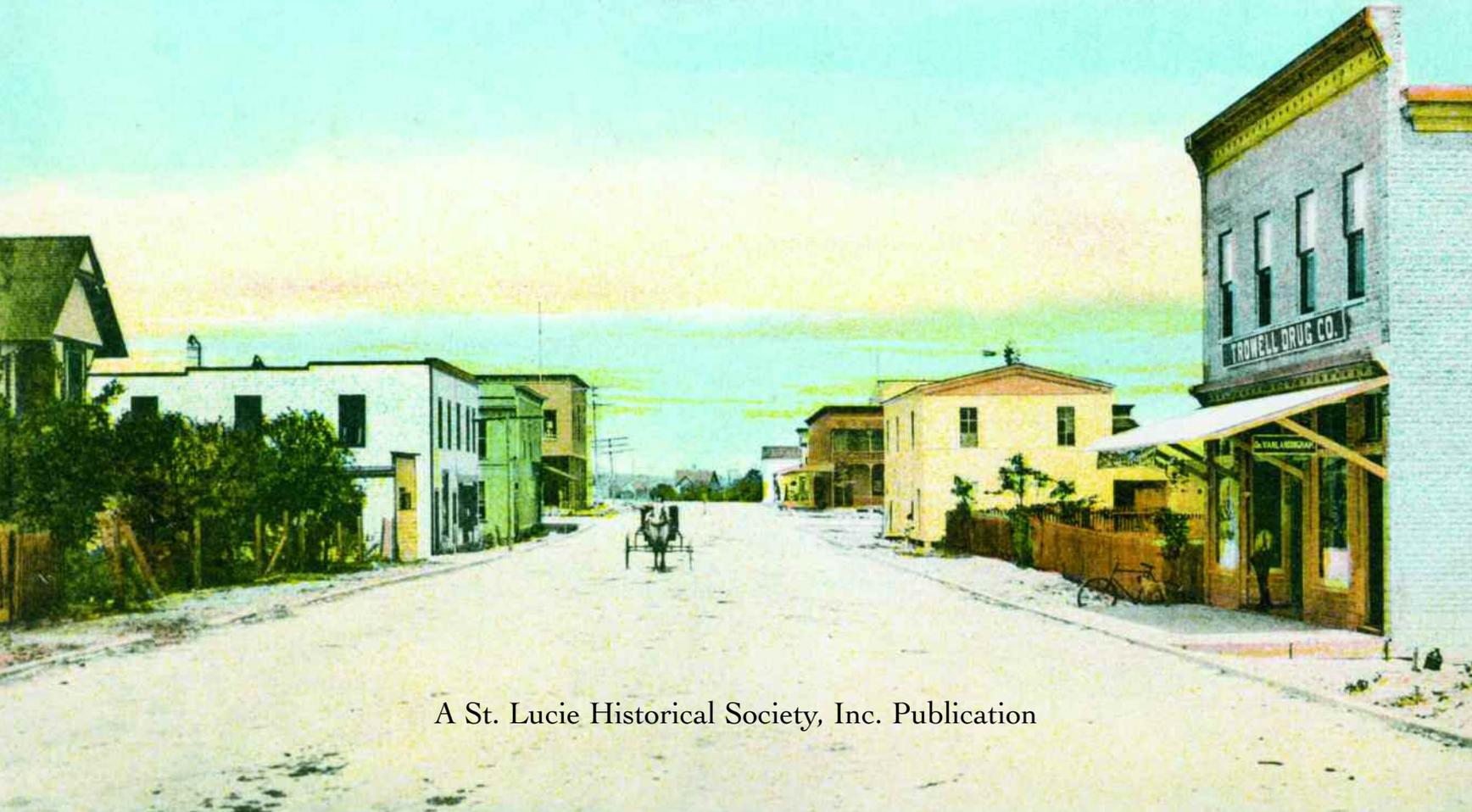
Participate in and support other historical organizations with community events and displays that portray the history of St. Lucie County and the East Coast of Florida.

Publication of or support for the publication of historical subjects of St. Lucie County and the East Coast of Florida.

Operation of a bookstore with books, journals, maps, photographs and local history memorabilia for sale.

The Society is a Florida Corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3). The Society is also classified as a public charity under 509(a)(2).

Fort Pierce, Fla. Pine Street.



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