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## An 1870 Itinerary from St. Augustine to Miami

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## AN 1870 ITINERARY FROM ST. AUGUSTINE TO MIAMI

*(Both the "King's Road," as far as it extended, and the inland water route are described, as are the embryo settlements, the landmarks, and the few settlers along the way. (From Hawks, Florida Gazetteer, New Orleans, 1871. Few copies were printed and the volume has become rare.)*

From St. Augustine to New Smyrna, you have the choice of three routes, (1) by land, horseback or with team. On this route you would the first day reach St. Joseph, an old sugar plantation belonging to General Hernandez, 27 miles south of St. Augustine and four miles west of Matanzas Inlet. Nearly all the way you are on the "King's Road." As there are few houses along the road, the old mile posts, most of which remain, are a great consolation to the traveller.

In walking this route, or riding horseback, I usually call at every house, the number being only four. Allen's is six miles from Augustine; Minusa's, seven miles; old Mrs. Ostein's, twenty; and Dupont's, 25 miles. The latter is the only place you can get "clabber," "buttermilk," or milk, until you reach St. Joseph. Here I always order a sumptuous repast of honey and milk for supper.

From this point if you wish to visit the *Port Orange Mill*, the best way is to strike out to the beach, letting your horse drink at the little creek, and take in his supply for thirty miles. You strike the beach at the old salt works, then set your face southward and you can't get lost. In ten miles you reach Dunham's Mahogany logs, and old camp. The first fifteen miles on the beach the sand is loose and the walking at the water's edge is tedious on account of slumping an inch at every step. Once across the soft walking the road is superb, hard as

a rock almost and smooth as a floor, gently inclined toward the water the white beach stretches out before you for thirty miles. On your right are the sand hills covered with grass and scrub or saw palmetto. On your left the broad Atlantic. A few nautilus shells have been found on this beach.

Twenty-five miles *more* or *less* from the old salt works you will be delighted at the sight of human footprints in the sand above high water mark; soon after you will see a rude guide post on your right on the top of the high bank through which a path has been shoveled. This path leads to

BOSTROM'S, on the east bank of the Halifax river, half a mile from the sea beach. Two brothers and a sister, Swedes, live here. They have the best house, and show the best evidences of industry and thrift of anybody on the river. The river here is a mile wide. Standing on the bank you can look across to the town *site* of *Palmetto*, late residences of W. W. Ross, and W. S. Wemple.

Five miles from Bostrom's turnout is a post at a path which leads across the sand hills to *Silver Beach*, the pleasant location and late residence of J. H. Mollison. The houses are in ruins; the banana plants and fruit trees run wild and are choked with weeds. Botifuhr has lately built a house near here. Five miles down the beach, another lone stake indicates a path which leads across to the Halifax. Half way across the sand hills stood *Marshall's Summer House* on a very commanding spot from which can be seen the ocean on the east, and several miles up and down the river. Standing on a shell mound on the bank of the river, looking west-erly across it are seen on the west bank, Sutton's, Roseborough's, Wells, post-office Bennett's, Johnson's, *McDaniels*, Mrs. Daniels', Tolliver's, Capt. Snow's, Swift's, C. C. Richardson's, Dr. Coleman's,

and Baxter's within a distance of eight miles. This Summer House place was in 1869 selected and entered by Mr. Savory who is now living in Boston. Three miles further down the beach, a stake marks a dull way across to Purdie's Mound or Green Mound. This is a pile of oyster shells thirty or more feet high on the western border of the sand hills, where doubtless was once the bank of the river which has now been crowded off, westerly half a mile by the marsh. Across this marsh Mr. Purdie had a canal dug to admit his boat to the foot of the mound, where he intended making extensive improvements; but with the failure of the mill his plans changed and Green Mound is still in the market. This is the highest point of land for several miles, and a palmetto tree standing near the summit is a land-mark both on land and on the sea.

Two miles further along the beach a path, not marked, and much grown up, leads across to *Foster's Hammock* on the river. It was selected in the spring of 1867, by Peter Foster, an honest Shaker who left the family at Canterbury, N. H. of which he had been a member for fifty years. He set out some orange trees in a small clearing he had made. He died in Jacksonville in 1868.

Returning to the beach and continuing two miles further, and until the wreck of the old Narraganset appears to be a mile ahead, and at some stakes on a sand hill, we find a path leading across to the river; mounting the first ridge of hills and looking west you see the Halifax river a mile off, on its eastern bank the tall coquina chimney of the steam saw mill close by ; also the houses built and once occupied by J. H. Fowler, G. W. Dewhurst, and Dr. Hawks. And this is *Port Orange*. The mill is idle, and only the family of Mr. Maly lives there.

B. Pacetty lives half a mile below at Bobb's Bluff, which is three-fourths of a mile north of the Inlet or Mosquito Bar.

Those who do not like so long a ride on the beach, will take the King's Road from St. Joseph to Bulow's Landing, an old sugar plantation thirteen miles distant; then bearing at first westerly to the Tomoka at Grover's ten miles; then past Luke Williams' place, one mile; thence to *McDaniels'* twenty miles; thence round by Mrs. Murray's, to New Smyrna fifteen miles.

2nd. Much the easiest route from St. Augustine is by one of the schooners, *Kate Cook*, or *Rover*, which are every few days leaving Jacksonville and St. Augustine for New Smyrna and Port Orange, fare \$5 to \$7, time ten hours with fair wind, from St. Augustine.

3rd. The Inland water route, which is after all as good as any, when it is considered that a boat is more convenient than a horse on the East Florida coast. To go comfortably by this route you get a sail boat well rigged that will carry your luggage and two or three men. Leaving St. Augustine at the right time of tide, and a favorable wind, you may reach Pelicer's landing, and get hauled across to Bulow that night. Most likely however the first night would be spent at St. Joseph, and half the next day taken to get the boat hauled over; expense of hauling thirteen miles, \$5. Griffith's at Bulow landing is a good place to stop at. Here the boat is launched again, on Bulow's Creek, which leads by a tortuous course through a marsh ten miles to the head of the Halifax river. The creek is fringed with occasional hammocks, covered with palmetto and cedar.

Three miles below Bulow's is the wild orange grove of B. F. Buckner. The Halifax does not en-

large gradually, like most rivers, it is as wide at its head as anywhere (about a mile) and square across. On the right, on entering the river is Bostrom's, "*Tiger Hammock*," and orange grove; a mile below, on the right side (west) is the mouth of the Tomoka river, which forms a bay a mile or more in width. The south bank of the Tomoka and the west bank of the Halifax make a point called *Mount Oswald*. This was formerly, in English times, an indigo plantation. Seven miles south of the right bank, is *Palmetto*, before mentioned; the post office is discontinued; it is an attractive point in a small grove of palmetto trees, whose white-washed trunks may be seen for several miles on the river.

On the opposite bank, about twelve feet above the water level, among some live oaks, is *Bostrom's* residence. Two miles below on the right is Baxter's place near "*Long Wharf*" which is a landmark of old times. Three or four miles below on the same side is Dr. Coleman's house on the Sawyer and Johnson place, also C. C. Richardson's. Nearly opposite, but a little lower down is Mollison's *Silver Beach*, mentioned on the beach route and Botifuhr's new house near. Five miles more to *Swift's Wharf*, used for loading lighters with live oak timber, large quantities of which R. N. Swift & Bro., of New Bedford, Mass., got out some two years ago, and which still lies piled up on the bank of the river near the *mill*, eight miles below here. Half a mile, Capt. Snow's; another half, Toliver, Watson and Richardson, industrious freedmen, who were soldiers in 34th U.S.C.T.

Opposite Baxter's, a straight line might be drawn up and down the river without touching either bank for twenty miles. From this part of the river also, *Bethune's Point* shows two palmetto trees apparently standing near the middle of the stream.

*Pelican Islands*, a little below *Swift's Wharf*, divide the river, the main channel of which passes on the east side.

*Savory's Hammock*, at Summer house, is opposite these islands.

M. Day of Mansfield, Ohio, has started a colony on the Williams tract opposite Mollison's place. A large hotel has been built and several families have located there.

A mile below Toliver's, and opposite *Oyster Point* which is the north end of a marsh island, is *McDaniel's* (a corruption of McDonald) which is the most central place on the river, owing to its having the only road leading back into the country. From this point "Mac" carries the mail to Enterprise, on the St. Johns, also passengers, the fare being \$5 for 33 miles.

A mile west of Mac's is the old famous "Dunlawton" estate, with its sugar house still standing but going to ruins. A little beyond is Mr. Vass' orange grove and residence. The trees are budded on the sour stock without transplanting; located in a moist hammock. Crop about 75,000 oranges a year. A mile below Mac's on the same bank is the

POSTOFFICE, kept by Mr. Wells, who also keeps a boarding house; the office was first started at Port Orange, and has retained that name though moved six miles.

Jacob Roseborough, an old hardworking and thrifty freedman, lives a few rods below.

*Sharp's Bay* is made by the marsh islands that sweep around from Oyster Point, half a mile from the shore, to the west bank, leaving

*Sharp's Creek*, a crooked channel running from the southeast side of the bay. Another channel leads to *Sutton's Grove*, of some six or eight hundred bearing trees. Average crop 100,000 or more.

*Half Dollar Island* is a patch of marsh grass growing on an oyster bank. A mile below is *Sutton's Creek*, which leads to the shell mound on which Mr. Sutton's house stands. Towards the south is *Fowler's Creek* which leads into *Fowler's Bay* or *Rose Bay*. The largest and best oysters in East Florida are found in this bay. Mr. Fowler who resides here, was born in Warner, N. H., educated at Harvard University ; a Unitarian and Universalist preacher in Massachusetts; a farmer in Minnesota; a volunteer assistant in the military hospital at Washington in 1862; a chaplain in the army from 1863 till the close of the war; since which time he has lived here, and has dug more miles of ditches, cleared more acres of heavy hammock, raised a larger orange nursery, tried more agricultural experiments, and seen less leisure hours than any other man in the State.

West of *Fowler's Bay* is the settlement of *Ned* and *David Morris*, also *Israel Smith*, freedmen, all having homesteads and being industrious and hard working men. A cart road leads from *Fowler's* westward joining the main *Enterprise* road half a mile east of *D. T. Wickwires*, four miles from the bay.

Returning to the river and passing *Fool's Creek* on the right, then *Foster's hammock* we round *Live Oak Point*, a sweep of a mile and here is

#### PORT ORANGE

Port Orange, once the center of high aims and hopes; headquarters of the colony started by the Florida Land and Lumber Company, which was organized by army officers then in service at Hilton Head, S. C., in October 1865. The object announced was: "To secure homesteads for freedmen and others, and to furnish a profitable investment for capital."



Thirty thousand dollars was pledged as stock, of which two-thirds was paid in. This was thrown away in a vain attempt to build and run a large steam saw mill. The first error was in changing its plan to have a small portable mill; and to purchase one of three times the capacity needed ; and worse than that, a second-hand one standing at Bangor, Me. All the company property was mortgaged to raise money to complete the mill and buy the first stock of logs. The large two-story mill is still standing on the bank of the river with machinery complete but idle.

Across the river, four miles up Spruce Creek is the town site belonging to M. H. Clay Esq., of Tallahassee. A mile beyond on the same bank is Mount Altitude, a bluff 40 ft. high. Two miles southwestwardly from the mill is the *Stone House* on the Todd grant. Here for awhile Gen. Ely had his headquarters, while trying to colonize some South Carolina freedmen ; and near is his 30 acre grove of oranges, neglected and ruined. Here also Maj. W. J. Purnam had his office for several weeks, as Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau.

Leaving Port Orange the Inlet is one mile, and crossing it we enter Hillsboro river and commence going up stream. *Massacre Bluff*, where six shipwrecked sailors were killed by Indians, is a mound covered with trees on the east bank. Capt. Dummett's old place, two miles from the Inlet on a high shell mound, now owned and occupied as office and residence by Geo. J. Alden, Deputy Collector at New Smyrna. Tall stalks of Sisal hemp stand on the tops and sides of the bluff.

NEW SMYRNA, three miles from the inlet, is a place of some fame. It has a postoffice, but no store, and three houses, two of which, Mrs. Sheldon's and Mrs. Lowd's, are first-class boarding houses. On these

rivers venison is as common as beef, fish and oysters are abundant. The oyster banks seem to be filling up the river and obstructing its navigation. Hawks' orange grove of young trees is two miles south of Smyrna on the river, and Sawyers' house half a mile beyond.

An unsettled region is next passed of several miles. Turtle Mound, or Mount Tucker, is twelve miles from New Smyrna. Dr. Fox's place, on the east bank, two miles below. Below this mound the river is called "the Lagoon," the crooked channel along the reefs is called "Devil's Elbow." On the west bank is the residence and grove of J. D. Mitchell Esq. late of Pennsylvania. He has a fine grove coming on.

Bill Scobie lives a mile south. Everybody in East Florida knows "Bill." He is an industrious and thrifty freedman whom everybody respects. He keeps a nice bed for his white friends to sleep in ; and Flora, his wife, raised by Mrs. Sheldon, can get as good a dinner as anybody on the river.

*Arad Sheldon*, a mile further, has an excellent and profitable grove. From here to the canal that leads from the lagoon to Indian river is ten miles. The canal is a mile north of Dummit's summer house, on the right, marked by two stakes in the water half a mile from the shore; water about one and a half to two feet deep all along within half a mile of the beach. If the wind has been north two days and filled the lagoon, a boat drawing eighteen inches will enter the canal, otherwise not, and you must get out and drag your boat, possibly unload it.

The CANAL is cut through a ridge of coquina rock and sand that separates the head of the Lagoon from the Indian river; it is about 500 yards long, straight and ten feet wide; a current runs through into the Indian river during and after a northerly

wind, and the reverse, during and after a southerly wind. The greatest difficulty in getting through, will be encountered at the start. The current has worn and washed out the soft rock from each side, forming considerable excavations, and allowing masses of rock and soil to cave in, obstructing the passage. A footpath leads along the canal, on the top of the bank, which is in the middle of the ridge, ten feet high, and sparsely covered with cedars. "*The Umbrella Tree*" marks the south end of the canal.

*Dummett's Grove* of thirteen acres and residence, is two miles to the east; the trees are temporarily injured by the scale insect, and the branches all cut off. They will grow out and bear again in two years. He has had a crop of a *quarter of a million*.

*Mrs. Futch's* grove and residence is a half mile to the east. Her crop in '69 was 30,000. In setting sail for *Sand Point*, which is ten miles off, you bear west of south until Black Point is passed, when the houses at the "Point" are within sight on the right bank.

*Indian River City* is the name proposed for Sand Point by Col. Titus, who is the leading spirit here. There is a post-office and two stores in the neighborhood. Sand Point is thirty miles from Cape Canaveral light house, and

*Capt. Burnham's* celebrated orange grove. The river is two to three miles wide here and is almost as straight as a line for more than a hundred miles.

*Merritt's Island* is in the shape of a triangle with its base at the north eight miles wide tapering to a point of rock at the south end not ten feet wide; the island is thirty miles long mostly pine land and has not a half dozen settlers on it.

*Banana Creek* which leads from the Indian river across the north end of the island looks plain enough

on the map, but is really difficult to follow. Emerging into Banana river its broad expanse of water stretches out before you like a bay for thirty miles. The largest of several hammocks is

*Burnham's Grove*, as it is known in east Florida. This is below the ordinary frost line. The main crop ripens in December; but several orange and lime trees ripen their fruit in May. Mr. Wilson, a son-in-law of Capt. B's, owns a grove at the same place. This grove is not as large as Dummitt's, but it has never been injured by the insect, and the fruit is equal to any in the world. From the grove, a good road leads across the peninsula to the Cape, and the *light house*, where Capt. B. resides. Encouraged by the example of Capt. Burnham, several persons have commenced planting groves in this vicinity. It would be a delightful business, and a fine place to live if it were not too far out of the world.

Across the river is the mouth of

ELBOW CREEK, an excellent harbor; and important as the entrance for steamers, which are in future to pass through the canal from Indian river to the St. Johns, at Lake Washington. The creek breaks through the bank of the river, which is here some twelve feet high and composed of coquina rock. On the river, in front of *Mr. Houston's* who lives at the mouth of the creek, the coquina ledge of rock is worn into pot holes, some as large as a barrel and ten feet deep. At Houston's the traveller will find good fare; green corn and vegetables in April.

*Cape Malabar* which appears on every map, and is supposed by geographers to be on the coast outside, is a low bank of white sand running from the west shore of the river into the stream a half mile or so,

*Turkey Creek* and *St. Sebastian River* coming in on the right, would both be passed unobserved unless you are on the lookout for them. About fifteen miles south of St. Sebastian, the river banks ahead seem to approach each other and leave a narrow gate for the river. This is

THE NARROWS, and is occasioned by oyster reefs on the east side of the river which have obstructed that part of the channel ; and these reefs form islands covered with mangrove trees. The channel which is left is being encroached upon in the same manner. This condition of the river continues to the INDIAN RIVER INLET, which admits vessels of only four or five feet draught. Opposite the inlet, at old Fort Capron, Mr. Payne, the Deputy Collector, resides. The Christmas frost of 1868 reached here, killing large alligator pear trees.

*(The itinerary from Indian River Inlet to Miami will be found in the QUARTERLY for October last.)*