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Douglas C. McMurtrie



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THE BEGINNINGS OF PRINTING IN FLORIDA

by DOUGLAS C. MCMURTRIE

Editor-in-chief, *Bibliography of American Imprints*

Printing came to Florida not as a result of natural expansion with a gradually increasing necessity for a press, nor for the purpose of Christianizing the Indians as was the case in some other areas; printing was introduced there as a result of war conditions outside the province. Florida had passed from Spanish to English hands in 1763 and had remained true to England throughout the Revolution, offering a haven for Tory refugees from the colonies to the north. In 1782 there was a great influx of loyalist Georgians, and later in the year, with the withdrawal of British troops from Charleston, refugees from South Carolina also came to Florida.

With the fleet that left Charleston for St. Augustine on December 14, 1782, was Dr. William Charles Wells, member of the Charleston printing family of that name and temporarily manager of the press for his older brother, John Wells. Acting in the name of his brother, Dr. Wells established the first Florida press and early in February 1783 began the St. Augustine *East-Florida Gazette*, royalist semi-official journal.

Dr. Wells's father, Robert Wells, was a Scotch bookseller and publisher who had opened a printing establishment at Charleston in 1758, when he established the *South-Carolina Weekly Gazette*. John Wells joined his father as publisher of the *Gazette* in 1775, and Robert Wells left for England during the summer, having made himself unpopular in South Carolina by his avowed loyalist sentiments. Three months later he was followed by William Charles Wells, who studied medicine in Edinburgh and London and in 1779 went to Holland as surgeon for a Scotch regiment in the service of the United States. Mr. McMurtrie died on September 29 while this number was in press.

Provinces. He returned to Edinburgh and received his degree of M.D., coming back to Charleston early in 1781. Meanwhile, John Wells had become publisher of the *Gazette* in his own name and issued it as a patriot journal. Dr. Wells is said to have persuaded his brother to visit their father in England for the purpose of reconciling him after the estrangement which followed John Wells's temporary adoption of the patriot views.

Although his name did not appear in connection with the *Gazette*, Dr. Wells edited it through the latter part of 1781 and all of 1782. Under him it was known as the Royal Gazette and appeared as a loyalist organ. When Dr. Wells became a part of the royalist exodus to St. Augustine, he took along with him the press and types as well as a pressman. The press was taken to pieces in order to transport it, and when he reached Florida, Dr. Wells found that his pressman could not reassemble it. He declared it the business of a press-joiner and out of his territory. Dr. Wells was neither an accomplished printer nor a mechanic, but he found among his books a printer's grammar, and by studying its illustrations he was able to put the press in order with the aid of a negro carpenter.¹

The earliest known copy of his *East-Florida Gazette* is volume one, number five, dated "From Saturday, February 22, to Saturday, March 1, 1783," from which it would seem that the paper had first appeared on February 1, 1783. It was "Printed by Charles Wright for John Wells, jun."² at the Printing-office in Treasury-lane, where Advertisements and Subscriptions are taken in." Wright is known

1. Aikman, quoting an extract from the obituary of William Charles Wells in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1817.
2. John Wells and John Wells, jun., were the same person. Possibly he had an uncle named John to whom he was "junior."

only through the appearance of his name as printer of the *Gazette* and was probably the pressman of the incident mentioned above.³

Dr. William Charles Wells made a trip to Charleston in July, 1783, to transact some business for his brother, and was greeted there with considerable bad grace as the editor of a loyalist paper. He was arrested and kept in jail for three months, with public opinion so aroused against him that rioters threatened the home of friends who were kind to him while he was imprisoned. He was finally allowed to leave for St. Augustine, "and very narrowly escaped death by the wreck of his vessel, on the passage thither."⁴ Dr. Wells continued to publish the *East-Florida Gazette* until his brother's arrival at St. Augustine from England in the spring of 1784.⁵ In consequence of his brother's return, the doctor left for Great Britain in May, 1784. He became famous in London as a physician and natural scientist and was honored by the Royal Society, of which he was a Fellow, in 1816. He died September 18, 1817.

Two books were printed at St. Augustine in 1784 over the name of John Wells and may have been

3. The only surviving issues of the *East-Florida Gazette* that are known are in the Public Record Office in London, where they were discovered by the late Dr. Worthington Ford. In addition to number 5, they are no. 14, "From Saturday, April 26, to Saturday, May 3, 1783," and no. 16, "From Saturday, May 10, to Saturday, May 17, 1783." The Library of Congress has photographs of the three from which I published facsimile reproductions, with an introductory note, in 1942. An issue of April 19 and an extra of April 21, 1783, are known from contemporary references, and another notice, concerning the issue of March 22, 1784, shows that the paper was published as late as the spring of that year.
4. Bartlett, p. 7, 17 (*v. Bibliography* appended.)
5. Aikman, p. 99, quoting from Dr. Wells's memoirs: "In consequence of my Brother's arrival from England, I embarked at St. Augustine for Great Britain in May 1784." Also Seibert, p. 138.

THE CASE
OF
The INHABITANTS
OF
E A S T - F L O R I D A

W I T H

An APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

PAPERS, BY WHICH ALL THE FACTS STATED IN THE
CASE, ARE SUPPORTED.

ST. AUGUSTINE, EAST-FLORIDA
PRINTED BY JOHN WELLS,
MDCCLXXXIV.
From the John Carter Brown Library

actually printed by him after his return from England. *The Case of The Inhabitants of East-Florida* was issued in fifty-seven pages with the imprint "St. Augustine, East-Florida : Printed by John Wells, MDCCLXXXIV." Also an edition of about a hundred copies of Samuel Gale's *Essay II. On The Nature and Principles of Publick Credit* appeared with the imprint "St. Augustine, East-Florida: Printed, for the author, by John Wells. MDCCLXXXIV."

The end of the Revolutionary War also marked the end of the European war involving England and Spain. In the peace treaty it was provided that Florida be exchanged for the recently captured Havana. The loyalist refugees in St. Augustine again found it necessary to move, and many of them went to the Bahama Islands. Among these was John Wells, who set up his press at Nassau, New Providence, and began publication of the *Bahama Gazette*, which he continued as late as the end of the century.⁶ He did some printing for export as well as for local use, issuing an almanac for 1787 intended for use in South Carolina and Georgia.⁷

6. Three copies of the *Bahama Gazette* are in the library of the American Antiquarian Society. The first is for March 17-24, 1787, v. 4, no. 138, "Printed by John Wells, at the Printing-Office in George-Street." The other issues are those of October 4-11, 1788, "Printed by John Wells, at the Printing-Office in Church-Street ;" and June 18-21, 1799, "Printed by John Wells." Seibert, p. 189, refers to this paper as the **Royal Bahama Gazette**, but none of the extant copies bear this title.

Thomas, v. 1, p. 351, says that Wells went from South Carolina directly to the Bahamas, making no mention of any printing in Florida. In my own article on *The First Printing in Florida* (1931) the error was made of saying that Wells went first to the Bahamas and then came to Florida. William Nelson, *Notes Toward a History of the American Newspaper*, New York, 1918, p. 80, made the same error.

7. **Andrews' South Carolina and Georgia Almanack and Ephemeris** for 1787 had the imprint: "Nassua [sic] New Providence: Printed by John Wells." Mabel L. Webber. "South Carolina Almanacs to 1800," in **South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine**, v. 24, 1914, p. 73-81.

At the time John Wells was in St. Augustine, East Florida was under British sovereignty, but by the treaty of September 3, 1783, both of the Floridas were ceded by Great Britain to Spain. They remained under Spanish control until July 10, 1821, when Spain relinquished the territory to the United States.

It has been thought until quite recently that no printing was done in Florida under the Spanish regime. There are, however, in the collections of Thomas W. Streeter and Everett D. Graff, copies of a pamphlet printed at Fernandina, on Amelia Island, in the northeast corner of Florida, in 1817. This is entitled *Report of the Committee Appointed to Frame the plan of provisional Government for the Republic of Floridas*. It was signed by Peter Gual, chairman, Vicente Pazos, and M. Murden. The imprint read: "Fernandina December 9th of 1817, first of the Independence of Floridas." This is the only extant product of the press at Fernandina known to me. Davis identifies R. Findley as "printer to the government." The press was operated in conjunction with Louis Aury's short-lived piratical government on Amelia Island.⁸

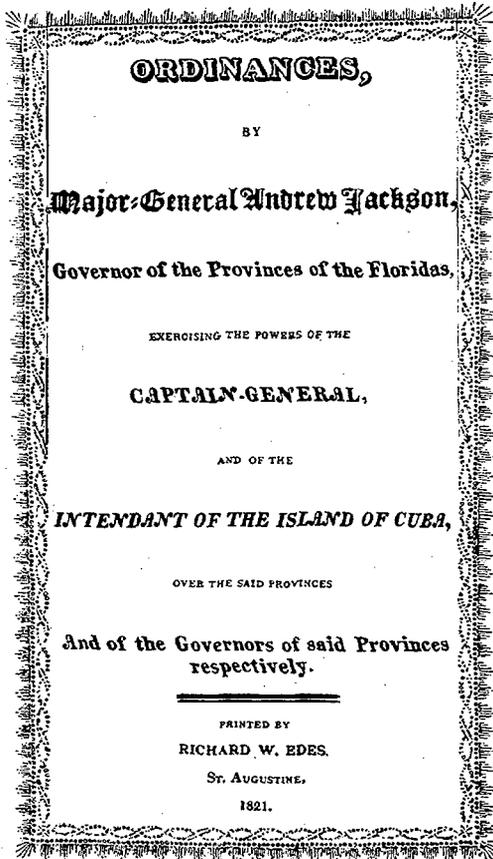
That a newspaper intended to promote the revolutionary movement was also published on the press has been pointed out to me by Clarence S. Brigham, of the American Antiquarian Society. The existence of *El Telegrafo de las Floridas* is known only from the following article in the *Charleston Courier* of December 19, 1817: "El Telegrafo de las Floridas. An attentive correspondent at St. Marys, forwarded to us by the last mail, the first number of a weekly

8. In 1942 I published a facsimile, reproduction of the Report, made with his kind permission from the Thomas W. Streeter copy, with an introductory note on the short-lived "Republic of the Floridas."

newspaper under the above title, printed in Spanish at Amelia Island. It announced a meeting of the Representatives of the Floridas under a discharge of artillery on the 1st inst. when Col. Irwin was elected President of that body, and steps were taken for the complete organization of the new Republican government. The paper abounds in editorial remarks upon the future destinies of the Republic of Florida, and with sentiments of contempt and detestation for the government of Spain. Its object is to furnish a record of passing events in that island, with interesting extracts from American and other foreign papers." This interesting newspaper must have expired almost immediately, for Aury's forces were subjugated by American war vessels on December 23, 1817.⁹

Printing was permanently established in Florida only when it came under United States rule in 1821. The earliest known product of the new press was a Spanish broadside directed to "Inhabitants of East Florida" announcing that on July 10, 1821, possession of the province of Florida was to be surrendered to Colonel Robert Butler, and that the Spanish troops were to evacuate the territory, in accordance with the treaty of February 22, 1819. Religious freedom, protection for private property, and the right to remove to Spanish territory, particularly Cuba, were promised in the broadside. The people were commanded to give their final proof of fidelity to Spain by obeying the King's order in transferring their allegiance to the United States. The broadside was signed by Colonel Jose Coppinger and dat-

9. Davis (*v. Bibliography* appended) gives a complete account of the revolutionary government of 1817. It seems likely that some other printing may have been done at Fernandina at that time. Possibly many of the manifestoes quoted by Davis from contemporary Carolina and Georgia newspapers were first issued on Amelia Island as printed broadsides.



From the Library of Congress

ed "San Agustin de la Florida 7 de Julio de 1821." ¹⁰

Although there is no imprint on this document, it was certainly printed at St. Augustine by Richard Walker Edes, who established the *Florida Gazette* there early in July, 1821. ¹¹ Edes came from a family of distinguished patriot printers. His grandfather, Benjamin Edes, was a Boston printer for fifty years and published the *Boston Gazette*, chief organ of the revolutionary party. Richard's father, Peter Edes, printed in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Maine, and during the Revolution was imprisoned by the British for his patriotic activities. Richard's older brother, Benjamin Edes III, printed at Baltimore during and after the War of 1812, and it was in his shop that the *Star-Spangled Banner* was first printed. ¹² It was with a firm American tradition and a family background of nearly seventy years in the printing business that Richard Edes had come to Florida in 1821. Unfortunately, Edes died October 15, 1821, in St. Augustine. Besides the *Gazette* and the broadside already noticed, he is known to have printed only one other work, but a single copy of which is known to me: *Ordinances, by Major-General Andrew Jackson, Governor of the Provinces of the Floridas*, which had the imprint: "Printed by Richard W. Edes, St. Augustine, 1821." ¹³ Edes's associates are not

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10. The original document is in the library of the Florida Historical Society and is reproduced in facsimile in the *Florida Historical Society Quarterly*, v. 6, July 1927, p. 40. Opposite the facsimile is a translation, which makes the error of saying that possession of Florida will be surrendered "On the tenth day of next month" (which would be August 10), instead of "On the next tenth day" (July 10).
 11. The earliest extant issue is that of July 28, 1821, v. 1, no. 3, which would indicate that the paper was established July 14, 1821.
 12. Knauss, p. 57. (*v. Bibliography*).
 13. The only known copy of the *Ordinances* as printed by Edes is in the Library of Congress. In 1941 I published a facsimile reproduction of the pamphlet, with an introductory note.

known, but the *Florida Gazette* was continued by them until the end of 1821.

The next printing office in St. Augustine was that of Elias B. Gould,¹⁴ who established the *East Florida Herald* in August 1822. Gould was a native of New Jersey and had entered the printing business at Newark, where in 1807 and 1808 he published the *Modern Spectator* in partnership with one Kollock, possibly Isaac Arnett Kollock. Gould continued to print in Newark until 1810, when he went to New York City, remaining there as late as 1818. In 1822 he came to St. Augustine from Charleston, South Carolina, and began the publication of his paper there. Its title was shortened to *Florida Herald* in 1829, and in 1834 Elias B. Gould was succeeded in its management by his son, James M. Gould. The printing office was destroyed by fire in January, 1835, and the paper was not re-established until April of that year. The *Herald* was continued by Gould beyond the end of the territorial period in 1845.

The Goulds had no competition in St. Augustine until 1838, although in 1834 James W. Simmons had proposed establishing a paper there, and in 1836 a Mr. Cocke had announced the intention of establishing a paper to be known as the *Florida Intelligencer*. Daniel W. Whitehurst, a native of Virginia who had seen service in Florida during the Seminole War, established the *St. Augustine News* in November, 1838. Whitehurst published the *News* until the end of 1840 and remained as editor through part of the next year, when he left Florida for New York. In 1843 he received the degree of doctor of medicine from New York University. About 1845 he went to Key West, where he accepted a position as post surgeon at Fort Jefferson, then being constructed

14. Knauss, p. 59-60.

on the island of Tortugas. He remained there until his death January 19, 1872.¹⁵

Whitehurst was succeeded on the *News* by Thomas T. Russell and Aaron Jones, Jr. Russell, a southerner by birth, published the *News* until the spring of 1845, when he left St. Augustine for Jacksonville, where he published for a short time the *Florida Whig*, a party organ which existed solely for political purposes. Jones came to the *News* from the Jacksonville *East Florida Advocate*, but he remained with the St. Augustine paper only a few months. From 1842 to 1844 Russell had as a partner Charles E. O'Sullivan, previously a compositor on the *Savannah Republican* of Georgia. After his two years in Florida, O'Sullivan returned to Savannah, where he was printing as late as 1869. When Russell left the *News* in 1845 he was followed by Albert A. Nunes, a foreign-born printer who was brought to the United States in 1819 at the age of two. He came to Florida about 1838, and his career after 1845 is not known. The *News* was moved to Jacksonville in 1846.

The third Florida printing town was Pensacola in West Florida, where Cary Nicholas and George Tunstall established a printing office in the summer of 1821. They ordered a press from Philadelphia in April, 1821, but it did not arrive at Pensacola until August 10, and on August 18, 1821, the first number of the Pensacola *Floridian* appeared. Nicholas, one of its publishers, was born in Virginia about 1786 and served in the United States army as an officer from 1809 to 1821, retiring as a major. He and Tunstall published the *Floridian* together until June, 1822. George Brook Tunstall was a printer from Nashville, Tennessee, where he had learned the trade in the shop of his uncle, Thomas

15. Knauss, p. 68.

Todd. From 1817 to 1821 Tunstall had been co-publisher of the *Nashville Whig*. After his brief appearance in Florida he became a planter in nearby Baldwin County, Alabama, where he died July 28, 1842.

About the earliest products of the Pensacola press, aside from the *Floridian*, were a number of broadsides containing the ordinances proclaimed in 1821 by Major General Andrew Jackson for the government of the Floridas, in the form particularly applicable to West Florida. These broadsides contained the text of the ordinances both in English and in Spanish, in substance practically the same as the corresponding East Florida ordinances printed in pamphlet form in the same year by Richard Edes at St. Augustine.¹⁶

Nicholas & Tunstall were the first official printers of the Territory. They printed the *Acts of the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida, Passed at their first session 1822*, incorporating in the same volume various federal acts, ordinances, and treaties concerning the transfer of Florida to the United States and its establishment as an independent territory. This document was published "By authority. Pensacola: Floridian Press, 1823."

Nicholas published the *Floridian* alone from 1822 to 1823 and was succeeded by John Fitzgerald, formerly a printer of Clarksville, Tennessee, who continued the paper for another year until its final suspension in the spring of 1824. Fitzgerald also fell heir to the public printing; the *Acts of the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida: Passed at their Second Session 1823* had the imprint "Published by Authority. Pensacola: Printed by John

16. Six of these broadsides are known. They are preserved among the State Department papers in the National Archives, Washington, D. C. In 1941 I published them in facsimile reproduction with an explanatory introduction.

ACTS
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF THE
TERRITORY OF FLORIDA.

PASSED AT THEIR FIRST SESSION

1822.

TOGETHER WITH

The Treaty of Cession—Governor Jacksons' Ordinances—The Act of Congress organizing the Territorial Government—Constitution of the United States—Spanish regulations for the allotment of Lands, &c. &c. &c.

BY AUTHORITY

PENSACOLA:
FLORIDIAN PRESS.

1822.
FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Fitzgerald & Co. 1823." Fitzgerald apparently returned to Tennessee, for a pamphlet imprint shows the firm of Hall & Fitzgerald to have been printing the *Nashville Republican* in 1827.

The *Floridian* was continued as late as March 1, 1824. Shortly thereafter its office was sold to William Hasell Hunt, who established the *Pensacola Gazette and West Florida Advertiser* on March 13, 1824. It was considered a successor to Fitzgerald's paper, and Hunt announced that "Subscribers to the *Floridian*, not withdrawing their names, will be considered as wishing to receive the *Gazette*, and expected to comply with the conditions," which were "Five Dollars per annum, payable *invariably* in advance." In his prospectus, published in the second issue of the paper, Hunt announced that he was disgusted with the state of national politics, and that his paper would "always be independently conducted on genuine republican principles." It was to include articles of news and information, and its columns were always to be open "to calm, dispassionate, and dignified communications, as well of those who do not, as of those who do agree" with the editor.¹⁷

William Hasell Hunt was born in Boston on August 31, 1800, and after studying at Harvard went to Kentucky in 1816, where his brother, William Gibbes Hunt, had been employed the year before as editor of the *Lexington Western Monitor*. The younger Hunt came to Pensacola early in 1822 and established there a bookstore and circulating library. From 1824 to 1829 he published the *Pensacola Gazette*. "Under Hunt's editorial supervision it was decidedly superior to all of its contemporaries. No

17. Knauss includes a facsimile of the front page of the second number of the *Pensacola Gazette*, March 20, 1824, in which the prospectus appeared.

other Florida paper published before 1845 contains more information of value to the historian than Hunt's *Gazette*." ¹⁸ From February 1828 until a year later, Hunt was in partnership with a Mr. Tardiff, and in 1829 Adam Gordon was editor of the *Gazette*. Hunt had previously employed Gordon and another printer to go to Tallahassee in 1824 to establish the first press and newspaper there, for the purpose of securing the public printing contract at the new capital.

Except for the newspaper, Hunt is known to have done little printing at Pensacola. The only recorded product of his press is *A Eulogy, on the Lives and Characters of John Adams & Thomas Jefferson*, by H. M. Brackenridge. It carried the imprint "Pensacola, Florida : Published by W. Hasell Hunt, 1826."

Hunt was tax assessor of Escambia County in 1824, clerk of the superior court of West Florida, a member of the Florida legislative council in 1829, and postmaster at Pensacola until he lost the position under Jackson's administration in 1829. He sold the *Pensacola Gazette* in July, 1829, and shortly afterwards went to Nashville, Tennessee, where he became publisher of the *National Banner* in 1830. Associated with him in this publication were his brother, William Gibbes Hunt, and Tardiff, who probably came with W. H. Hunt from Pensacola. Hunt and Tardiff remained together at Nashville for several years, and in 1834 Hunt established a magazine known as the *Kaleidoscope*. Hunt died at Nashville on July 3, 1841. Like his brother, he was a man of superior attainments and education, but, according to Knauss, he "came to Florida a decade too early."¹⁹

18. Knauss, p. 17.

19. Knauss, p. 48-49.

When Hunt left Pensacola, the *Gazette* was then printed "weekly by Jerome D. Moore for the Proprietor, Publisher of the Laws of the United States and of the Territory of Florida." Apparently this title referred only to the publication of the laws in the columns of the paper, for the separate publication of the laws was done at Tallahassee. In 1830 Blount and Aitken became publishers of the *Pensacola Gazette*. Aitken was John Aitken, who left Florida for Texas and in 1831 was publisher with Robert E. Williamson of the San Felipe de Austin *Mexican Citizen*.²⁰ By 1833 the *Pensacola Gazette* was in the hands of P. M. S. Neufville, and in 1834 Benjamin Drake Wright became the owner. The latter was a Pennsylvanian by birth who became an important political figure in Florida, being a member of the territorial legislative council, mayor of Pensacola, chief justice of the state supreme court, and occupant of various other prominent positions. Wright was not a printer, so he brought John M'Kinlay from New Orleans to manage the practical end of his paper. M'Kinlay had learned to print on the *Charleston Courier* in South Carolina. He printed the *Pensacola Gazette* from 1834 to 1839 and thereafter was its publisher, at first with editorial assistance from Wright. M'Kinlay continued the *Gazette* until its suspension was forced by the Civil War. After the war he continued to work as a printer at Pensacola, although in another man's shop. "M'Kinlay is almost unique in one respect: during the eleven years that he was connected with the press of territorial Florida he seems to have held no public office, and he apparently desired none. He was a newspaper man first and last. . . . there can be no doubt about his skill as a printer. His super-

20. See Douglas C. McMurtrie, *Pioneer Printing in Texas*, Austin, Texas, 1932, p. 13.

ior in this respect was not found in Florida." ²¹

The *Pensacola Gazette* had no rival during the territorial period except in 1828, when Thomas Eastin, a printer with a long record of work in Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, decided to establish the *Florida Argus* at Pensacola. Probably he came to Florida from Greensboro, Alabama, where he was publishing the *Green County Patriot* in 1825.

When Hunt heard of Eastin's plan for an invasion of Pensacola, he wrote gloomily in the *Gazette* of April 4, 1828: "An Opposition Press-We have heard it whispered that another Press is to be established at Pensacola. If it can be possible that anyone feels disposed to contend with us for the little we now enjoy from the kind encouragement of our few patrons, be it so:-one or both must starve."

Eastin began the *Florida Argus* on "Tuesday morning, June 17, 1828."²² In his first issue he wrote: "In our hurry to issue the first number of the 'Florida Argus' some errors have crept in, and want of time have prevented our preparing our rules, &c. so as to make it a fair and clear impression. Our debut has been rather hasty-time will improve our dress, as well as extend our means, by reason of an exchange of papers from different parts of the Union, of giving greater variety to our columns." In his formal prospectus in the first issue, Eastin announced, in part: "The editor is determined to keep aloof from all individual bias-to hold his press free from all party feuds and animosities, and to preserve his columns uncontaminated by private quarrels and animadversions-to conduct, in fine, an

21. Knauss, p. 71.

22. A complete file of the *Florida Argus* from its establishment June 17, 1828, to its final issue of November 18, 1828, is in the Ayer collection of the Newberry Library, Chicago. Knauss does not list this file or any other copies of the *Argus*.

impartial and *independent* newspaper. . . . The Mobile Commercial Register, Tuscaloosa Chronicle, Alabama Journal, Greensborough Herald and Claiborne Herald, will please give the above a few insertions."

By June 24, in his second issue, Eastin found time to express himself at some length on the cool reception given the *Argus* in the *Gazette's* editorial quoted above. Among other comments, Eastin said: "The Editor is not unaware of the obstacles which oppose themselves to his present and even to his ultimate success. With a full knowledge of them all, he has ventured with humble confidence upon the enterprize of surmounting them. He brings to the task a long acquaintance with the business in which he is engaged. . . . The Editor disclaims any intentions or wish to supercede any other of his profession.-He is desirous only of a fair competition, and his course shall be such that hereafter vice and folly alone shall have the right to denominate him The Opposition. ' " Eastin maintained a consistent stand in favor of encouraging new papers in the territory ; in hailing the advent of the Tallahassee *Floridian* he commented "We are happy to find that the rapid increase of population in the Territory is such as gives encouragement sufficient for the establishment of a fifth Newspaper." ²³ He expressed himself similarly ²⁴ at the establishment of the *Magnolia Advertiser*.

November 18, 1828, marked the last issue of the

23. *Florida Argus* of October 14, 1828.

24. "The Magnolia Advertiser.-In another column the reader will find the Prospectus of a newspaper to be published under the above title, in the Town of Magnolia, Middle Florida. Nothing can conduce more, we conceive, to the moral and intellectual improvement of man, than well conducted public Journals, it is therefore hoped that the 'Magnolia Advertiser' may prove an useful vehicle of information to the community, and realize the highest expectations of its editor."

paper. Eastin there announced: "The establishment of the 'Florida Argus' will be transferred to Key West, from whence papers for the balance of the year will be forwarded to the subscribers of the Argus who have paid in advance." On December 26, 1828, Hunt had the pleasure of writing in the *Gazette* that "Mr. Eastin of the Florida Argus left for Key West with his Press, Type, & Materials on the brig Enterprise on 23d inst."

In 1823 the second legislative council, held at St. Augustine, decided that the capital must have a central location; a site was selected in the wilderness, and in 1824 Tallahassee was founded, midway between the important towns of St. Augustine and Pensacola. Naturally the prospect of a public printing contract attracted printers to the new capital, which became the fourth printing point in Florida. It was with the public contract in mind that William Hasell Hunt announced in the *Pensacola Gazette* of April 17, 1824: "We contemplate fixing a branch of our office at Tallahassee very shortly and in that case a newspaper will be published there as soon as mail routes are established." By October plans were completed for the new paper, and a prospectus for the Tallahassee *Florida Intelligencer* under the management of Gordon, Crane and Company was issued. Hunt wrote: "We have formed a partnership with Messrs. Adam Gordon and Ambrose Crane to publish the *Florida Intelligencer*." ²⁵ Type, press, and paper left Pensacola for Tallahassee on November 15, 1824, ²⁶ and the paper was established February 19, 1825. ²⁷

25. From the *Pensacola Gazette* of October 23, 1824.

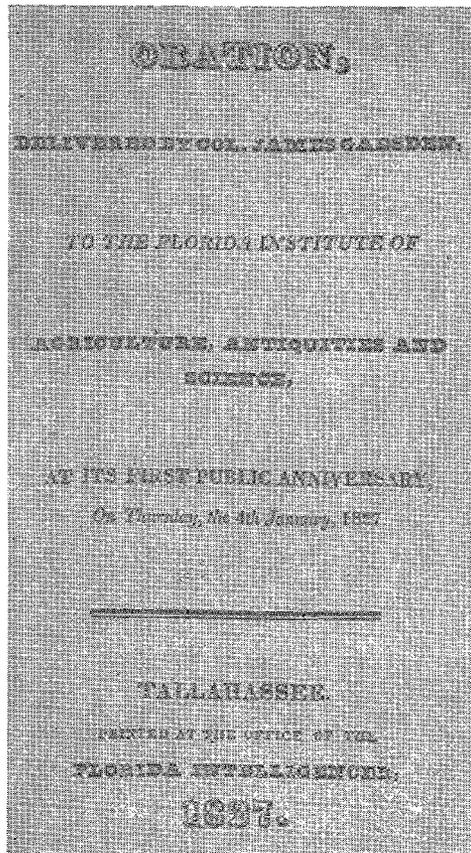
26. From the *Pensacola Gazette* of November 20, 1824.

27. The *Pensacola Gazette* of March 19, 1825, announced the arrival of the first number of the *Florida Intelligencer* and quoted from the February 19 issue of the *Intelligencer*. Also see Knauss, p. 24, for a discussion of the date of establishment of the *Intelligencer*.

The first number of the *Intelligencer* said that it would not be issued regularly until after the territorial laws were printed. Between February 19 and August 20, 1825, when the *Intelligencer* announced that it would resume publication, all the efforts of the printing office were devoted to the laws. As a result, the *Acts of the Legislative Council of the Territory of Florida, passed at their third session, 1824, together with The former acts, and parts of acts now in force, the Laws of Congress organizing the government of the Territory of Florida, and Constitution of the United States* were published in a volume of more than three hundred pages, with the imprint "Tallahassee, Printed at the Office of the Florida Intelligencer, 1825."

Gordon dropped out of the *Intelligencer* firm at the end of 1825, later to return to Pensacola and the *Gazette*. Crane published the paper alone until July 1826, when he was succeeded by Algernon S. Thruston, a twenty-five year old lawyer from Kentucky. He published the *Intelligencer* for about six months only, later becoming collector of customs and inspector of the revenue for the Key West district. The Acts of the fourth legislative council were issued with the imprint "Tallahassee. Printed at the Office of the Florida Intelligencer, 1826," and those of the fifth legislative council appeared at "Tallahassee, Printed by A. S. Thruston."

The *Intelligencer* was suspended between December, 1826, and February or March, 1827, when Edgar Macon purchased the plant and began the *Florida Advocate*. Macon was followed by Joseph D. Davenport. Beall and Greenup edited the paper for him during 1827 and 1828. They were succeeded in 1829 by Leslie A. Thompson, a lawyer, who acted as editor until the *Advocate* was amalgamated with the *Floridian* in August, 1829. Thompson was not a newspaper man or printer by profession, although he



From the library of Julien C. Yonge

later acted again as an editor, for the *Floridian* in 1831. He became a justice of the Florida supreme court and compiler of a notable digest of Florida laws.

Until the fall of 1828 the *Intelligencer-Advocate* office had the only press at the capital and received all the public favors, but on October 7, 1828, William Wilson established the *Floridian*, "most influential Florida paper of the succeeding half-century."²⁸ Wilson managed to secure the contract for printing the documents of the seventh legislative council, which met in the fall of 1828, and published the *Acts* of that session with the imprint "Printed by William Wilson. Tallahassee, 1829." Apparently discouraged by the loss of this important business, Davenport sold his *Advocate* to the *Floridian*, and after a short period as Wilson's partner, disappeared from the scene. Wilson remained publisher of the *Floridian* until 1837 and retained the public printing contract until that time, with the exception of 1831.

Samuel Shute Sibley, previously a New Jersey printer, acquired the *Floridian* in 1837. He began his career in 1829 when at the age of twenty-one he bought the Bridgeton *West Jersey Observer*. He sold this in 1833 and the next year obtained the Bridgeton *Washington Whig*, which he continued till he came to Florida in 1837. He sold the *Floridian* to Dr. Edward R. Gibson early in 1841 and left Tallahassee, but returned at the end of the year to take control of the *Floridian* again. He continued the paper for some years, leaving Florida for Georgia in 1841, when he became publisher of the

25. Knauss, p. 24, who gives a facsimile of the front page of the *Floridian* for November 18, 1828, v. 1, no. 7. A *Floridian* prospectus, dated "Tallahassee, Sept. 22, 1828," was published in the Pensacola *Florida Argus* of October 21, 1828. The *Argus* of October 14, 1828, had welcomed "the establishment of a fifth Newspaper."

Savannah Georgian. Sibley died at Savannah on November 18, 1858. He was Florida public printer in 1838 and 1839.

The third Tallahassee printing office was that of the *Florida Courier*, established in December, 1830, by William Mortimer Smith and edited by Edward R. Gibson. The paper lasted only a little more than a year, but during that year the firm of Gibson & Smith did the public printing. Gibson about 1832 became an associate editor of the *United States Telegraph* at Washington and assumed complete editorial charge of that paper in 1835. He returned to Florida in 1840 to publish the Tallahassee *Floridian*, first in partnership with Sibley and then with Nathaniel M. Hibbard. Both Gibson and Hibbard died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1841, and the *Floridian* continued until Sibley's return, later in the year, by F. H. Flagg.

Smith and Gibson are said to have lost two thousand dollars in their venture, but they did produce one famous work, *The Lost Virgin of the South*, a novel of Indian adventures during the War of 1812. It was written by Don Pedro Casender and carried the imprint "Tallahassee : Published by, and for, M. Smith, 1831." The names of both members of the firm appeared on the *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Florida*, published at "Tallahassee: Printed by Gibson & Smith, 1831."

Another Masonic pamphlet issued at Tallahassee was *No. 3. Annual Publication. Grand Lodge of Florida*, with the imprint "Tallahassee: R. Dinsmore Westcott, Printer. 1833." Westcott is not known to have been connected with a Tallahassee newspaper, but by May, 1833, he had established the *Advertiser* at Apalachicola, marking the introduction of the press there. He later moved his paper to St. Joseph.

John Baldwin and David Sheffer published the

THE
LOST VIRGIN OF THE SOUTH.
A TALE OF T R U T H .

**Connected with the history of the Indian war in the
South, in the years 1812-13-14 and 15, and Gen.
Jackson, now President of the U. States.**

BY DON PEDRO CASENDER.

Para volentem ducunt nolentem trahunt.
"The fates lead the willing and drag the unwilling."

Astra regunt homines; sed regit astra Deus.
"The stars govern men, but God governs the stars."

TALLAHASSEE:

PUBLISHED BY, AND FOR, M. SMITH

1831.

From American Antiquarian Society Library

Tallahassee Gazette briefly in the latter part of 1835, and Edward Chandler and C. R. Sessions published the *Tallahassee Florida Intelligencer* early in 1836. No. 5 of the Florida Masonic Grand Lodge annual communications was printed at "Tallahassee. David Sheffer-Printer. 5835," and No. 6 was published at "Tallahassee: Printed by Chandler & Sessions. 1836."

In November 1836 Joshua Knowles purchased the *Intelligencer* printing plant and established the *Florida Watchman and Tallahassee Literary Gazette*. Knowles was a preacher-printer who wandered through the south for half a century, filling pulpits here and there and editing newspapers and periodicals, chiefly religious, in his spare time. He printed in South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia.²⁹ Knowles had G. W. Hutchins as partner at Tallahassee. They succeeded to the Masonic printing, and *An Abstract of the Proceedings, of the Grand Lodge, of Florida*, met in January 1837, was published by "Knowles & Hutchins, Printers, Tallahassee, April 22d." The next year they published *Proceedings in Organizing the Diocese and Journal of the Primary Convention, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in Florida* with the imprint "Tallahassee : Knowles & Hutchins-Printers. 1838." Knowles sold the *Watchman* in 1839 to J. B. Webb, who established the *Tallahassee Star*, while Knowles established the first press and newspaper at Quincy. This was the *Quincy Sentinel*, which Knowles brought back with

29. Joshua Knowles established the *South Carolina Watchman* at Columbia in 1830. After leaving Florida he went to Georgia and established the *Rome Courier* in 1851. This was followed by the *Southern Recorder*, and in 1855 he began the *Macon Journal and Messenger*, continued until 1863. In 1873 he established at Greensboro the *Georgia Home Journal*. From 1833 to 1868 he was a Methodist minister, and in the latter year he became a Protestant Episcopal minister. He lived at Greensboro, Georgia, from 1869 till his death on March 25, 1887. Knauss, p. 49-51.

him to Tallahassee as the *Florida Sentinel* in 1841. Knowles sold the *Sentinel* in 1843 and later went to Georgia where he published several papers. The *Sentinel* was continued by others for more than thirty years.

Joseph Clisby, purchaser of the *Sentinel*, was public printer in 1843, but with this exception the owners of the *Tallahassee Star* held the public contracts from 1840 until the end of the territorial period and later. B. F. Whitner, Jr., was public printer in 1840, and Cosam Emir Bartlett held the position in 1841 and 1842. The public documents were issued by the "Office of the Star of Florida" in 1844, and in 1845 Washington & Cosam Julian Bartlett were public printers.³⁰

The fifth printing point in Florida was Magnolia in the Tallahassee district. Here a press and newspaper was established December 12, 1828, by Augustus Steele, and shortly afterwards the *Pensacola Gazette*³¹ noted: "We have received the first number of the *Magnolia Advertiser* printed at the new and flourishing town of Magnolia on the St. Marks River. It is a small sheet, well printed."

In his prospectus, Steele published his profession of faith as follows:

"The rapid and almost unexampled increase of population and of business; which in little more than a year have made Magnolia a place of considerable commercial importance, the extent and variety of the resources on which depend her prosperity and support, and the necessity of having a vehicle of general intelligence at a point where the earliest

30. Cole, p. 213-214. (v. *Bibliography*).

31. Quoted from the *Pensacola Gazette* of December 26, 1828.

A prospectus for the *Magnolia Advertiser*, signed A. Steele, and dated "Magnolia, Oct. 14, 1828" appeared in the *Pensacola Florida Argus* of November 4, 1828. The prospectus also appeared in the second number of the *Magnolia Advertiser*, a copy of which is in the Library of Congress.

information, in a commercial as well as all other points of view, can be obtained together with the growing prosperity and increasing population of this portion of the Territory, have induced the subscriber to present himself to the public for their patronage, in support of a commercial paper in this place. As the design of the paper is, to be a general intelligencer for town and country, to aid in the dissemination of useful information to every class of our citizens, the conflicts and asperities of political parties, which can do any thing else but promote the objects for which it is intended, will be excluded from its columns. When not otherwise occupied they will be enriched with selections from the most approved periodical publications of the day, and with such original matters as may from time to time be furnished, to add interest and usefulness to its pages. The earliest intelligence, upon subjects in any way connected with the interests of the Territory, will be given, and from the assistance which has generously been offered by gentlemen of literary and scientific acquirements, and of extensive means of information, the editor is confident of being amply able to redeem his pledge.

“A price current of the products of our country, and of the articles of foreign growth and manufacture in this, and other markets, will be regularly furnished, carefully and accurately corrected from time to time from advices by the different arrivals from other ports.

“In thus presenting a brief outline of his views, the Editor feels confident, from the variety of his resources, and from advantages of location, of offering to his patrons a useful and interesting Journal which shall entitle him to the support of a liberal and enlightened community.

“A. Steele.”

Steele discontinued the paper early in 1830. He later became a member of the state legislature and held various public offices until his death in Welborn on October 26, 1864. Except for the *Advertiser* no printing is known to have been done at Magnolia during the early period.

The sixth printing point in the present state was Key West, almost entirely separated from the rest of Florida on its little island at the extreme southern tip of the peninsula. Thomas Eastin, itinerant printer who, as has been noted, published the *Florida Argus* at Pensacola during the last half of 1828, came to Key West early in 1829 and on January 8 established the *Key West Register and Commercial Advertiser*. The paper was suspended in 1830, and from 1834 to 1836 Eastin was United States marshal at Key West. He was navy agent at Pensacola in 1839 and later lived in Mount Vernon, Alabama, dying in 1865 at the age of seventy-seven.³²

After the suspension of Eastin's *Key West Register* no printing was done on the island until the establishment of the *Key West Gazette* by Benjamin B. Strobel and L. M. Stone in the spring of 1831. A sample copy was issued on March 21, and the first regular issue appeared on April 20. In October, 1831, Thomas N. Jeffrys became publisher, with Strobel and Stone as editors. Strobel became sole editor in February 1822, and he and Jeffrys continued the paper until September 5, 1832, when it was probably discontinued. At the time that he began the *Gazette*, Strobel was acting army surgeon at Key West. While he was associated with the paper he was also town councilman and port physician. In the fall of 1832, after the paper was suspended, he returned to his native South Carolina

32. Knauss, p. 68-69.

and practiced medicine in Charleston. He was appointed an army surgeon for the Seminole War.³³

Another paper³⁴ was begun October 15, 1834, when Jesse Atkinson established the *Key West Enquirer*, which lasted until the fall of 1836. It was edited by William Adee Whitehead, a native of New Jersey, who had some pretensions to a literary and historical viewpoint in his conduct of the *Enquirer*. He was later mayor of Key West and eventually returned to New Jersey.

William D. Wharton established the *Key West South Floridian* in the summer of 1838; it was continued as late as the end of 1839. Edwin L. Ware and E. B. Scarborough began the *Light of the Reef* at Key West in 1844. In 1845 this paper became the *Key West Gazette*, published by Scarborough.

A printing firm at Key West not known to have published a paper there was that of G. F. Hopkins & Son, who were active in 1838. The only recorded product of their press is a sixty-four page pamphlet in Spanish, intended as a vindication of attacks made on the Count of Villanueva, general superintendent of Cuba, in the Florida press. This was entitled *Apuntaciones de un Empleado de Real Hacienda, En vindicacion de la superintendencia general delegada de la isla de Cuba, bajo el mando del ecselentisimo senor Conde de Villanueva, con motivo de las especies falsas y calumniosas esparcidas en varios folletos y periodicos recién publicados en la peninsula*. The title page was ornamented with a wood-cut, and the imprint was "Key-West,

33. Knauss, p. 70-71.

34. Knauss, p. 39, suggests that between 1832 and 1834 there may have been a paper published at Key West with the name of *Sentinel*.

December, 1838. [G. F. Hopkins & Son, Printers.]³⁵

Florida's seventh printing town was Apalachicola, where R. Dinsmore Westcott brought a press in the spring of 1833 after a brief appearance at Tallahassee in the same year as printer of the Masonic annual report. He established Apalachicola *Advertiser* in April or May 1833. On October 1, 1835, Westcott issued the prospectus of a new paper to be established at nearby St. Joseph, and shortly after he began the *St. Joseph Telegraph*. In November, 1835, Westcott combined the *Advertiser* with it.

Apalachicola was a land-boom town pushed by a real estate firm, and when a decision of the United States Supreme Court took the land away from the company in which Westcott was interested and sent the company, the printer, and his press to establish a rival community at St. Joseph, the new real estate company looked about for a new publicity organ. They succeeded in bringing to Apalachicola a Georgia newspaper publisher of nineteen years experience, Cosam Emir Bartlett. He had studied at Dartmouth College and learned printing in a shop at Hanover, although he later became a lawyer. He is said to have edited a Charleston, South Carolina, paper before becoming co-publisher of the *Columbian Museum* at Savannah, Georgia. He published the *Macon Telegraph* with his brother Myron, and in 1828 he established the *Savannah Mercury*. He edited the Columbus, Georgia, *Democrat* in 1830 and

35. A copy of this pamphlet is in the Boston Public Library.

George F. Hopkins & Son of Key West was probably the firm of similar name which had printed earlier in New York and Cincinnati. George Follitt Hopkins published five papers in New York City, four of them under the editorship of Noah Webster, Jr. These were the *New York Herald*, 1796-1797; the *New York Minerva*, 1796-1797; the *New York Spectator*, 1797-1799; and the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, 1797-1799. Webster was not associated with Hopkins' *New York Weekly Inspector*, 1806-1807. In 1819 and 1820 George F. Hopkins was co-publisher of the Cincinnati, Ohio, *Inquisitor*.

is said to have published a paper at Milledgeville, Georgia.

Bartlett established the *Apalachicola Gazette* on March 10, 1836. According to Knauss, "A better man for the situation could hardly have been found. Bartlett was keen, humorous, resourceful, and energetic. He was indefatigable in his attacks on St. Joseph and its business. He gave to the *Gazette* far more personality than was usually found in the sheets of the day." Bartlett published the first and only daily paper in Florida during the territorial period when he issued a daily *Gazette* in 1839 and 1840. In the latter year he sold the *Gazette*, which was continued by others, and purchased the *Tallahassee Star*, in the publication of which he was assisted by his sons, who were the last public printers for the territory and the first for the state of Florida. After 1846 Bartlett published his Tallahassee paper as the *Southern Journal*.

According to tradition, Bartlett one day got rid of some unpleasant callers who objected to his policies by threatening to blow up the visitors, the printing office, and himself with a lighted match held over a keg of gunpowder. He was an extraordinarily firm-minded and intelligent printer and publisher. He died near Columbus, Georgia, on October 10, 1850.³⁶ His sons, Washington and Cosam Julian Bartlett, were both printers. Before their father's death they had left Florida for California, where Washington Bartlett established the *San Francisco Journal of Commerce* on January 23, 1850, with equipment which had been brought from Florida. Washington Bartlett later became mayor of San Francisco and governor of California.

Apalachicola had the *Apalachicola Courier* for a few months in 1839 and 1840, published by Joseph

36. Knauss, p. 53-56.

Croskey. The old *Gazette* became the *Florida Journal* in 1840 and was continued till 1843 by J. B. Webb and others. In 1843 it became the *Watchman of the Gulf*, under E. A. Ware and William T. Robinson, but it lasted only from August to October. It was later revived for a short period. In 1840 the *Commercial Advertiser* was established at Apalachicola by T. H. Thompson and G. F. Baltzell. During part of its career it was known as the *Apalachicolian*.

As a result of the land-boom activities already mentioned, St. Joseph had a newspaper before it really existed. At least it seems reasonable to believe that Westcott printed his *St. Joseph Telegraph*, begun in November 1835, at his Apalachicola office at first, for we are told that by the middle of 1836 there were only three small huts on the site of St. Joseph.³⁷ Westcott sold his paper to Peter W. Gautier, Jr., in July 1836, and the paper became the *St. Joseph Times*. Gautier was assisted by R. A. Domingue from 1839 until the paper was discontinued in 1841.

In 1838 St. Joseph triumphed over its rival, Apalachicola, by securing the Florida constitutional convention. As a result of this meeting the *Journal of the Proceedings of a Convention of Delegates to form a Constitution for the People of Florida, Held at St. Joseph, December, 1838* was published at "St. Joseph: Printed at the 'Times' Office, 1839." The *Constitution or Form of Government for the People of Florida* had the same imprint, and as a special bow to the constitutional convention, the publishers of the *Times* felt called upon to print on blue satin a broadside *Constitution of the State of Florida*.³⁸

Jacksonville preceeded St. Joseph as a printing

37. Knauss, p. 111, citing contemporary references.

38. Copies of the *Journal* and of the pamphlet *Constitution* are in the Library of Congress. The blue satin broadside is in the Huntington Library in California.

point, with the *Jacksonville Courier* established January 1, 1835, by Lorenzo Currier, with Elijah Williams as editor. Both Currier and Williams were from Massachusetts. Williams left the firm in November, 1835, and Currier sold the paper in 1836, after it had been suspended for several months, to Haslam and Dexter. They were succeeded in 1838-1839 by Weir and Richardson, with the Reverend David Brown as editor. Brown was born in Rhode Island and came to St. Augustine in 1833 as a missionary. He left Florida in 1843 and died in Lambertville, New Jersey, on December 7, 1875. He did no newspaper work except for the *Jacksonville Courier*, but he did issue proposals in 1838 for establishing the *Florida Magazine*, which, if it had been established, would have been the first magazine in the territory.

The *Jacksonville Courier* was discontinued in 1839 before the establishment in September of the second Jacksonville paper, the *East Florida Gazette*, by Aaron Jones, Jr. The *Gazette* was discontinued by the end of 1840, and Jones, with Thomas T. Russell, began to publish the News at St. Augustine. For two years no paper was issued at Jacksonville, but in December 1842 George M. Grouard established the *Tropical Plant*, after having issued a prospectus in November. This paper was succeeded in 1845 by the *Florida Statesman*, which Grouard sold a year later. In 1846 he published the *Whig Banner* at Palatka, south of Jacksonville.

There may have been a printing office active in Jacksonville in 1842 even though no paper appeared until the end of the year, for at least one book is known to have been printed there in that year. It is also possible that the printer whose name appeared on it was a member of the *Tropical Plant* staff. The book in question is *A Descriptive List of all the Private Land Claims in East Florida*, published with

the imprint "Jacksonville, E. F. Printed by George Shidell. 1842."

Quincy, northwest of Tallahassee, became the tenth printing town when the *Quincy Sentinel* was established there November 15, 1839, by Joshua Knowles. Clisby and Smith were associated with the *Sentinel*, which was brought to Tallahassee early in 1841. Except for this brief period there was no printing at Quincy during the early period, but the little *Sentinel* office seems to have had a fairly active career. The *Journal of the Third Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the Diocese of Florida* had the imprint "Quincy: Printed at the Sentinel Office. 1840." The next year *A Journal of the Fourth Annual Convention* of the same body was issued at "Quincy: Printed by Clisby & Smith. 1841."

Port Leon in the Tallahassee district was promised a newspaper as early as September 20, 1839, when Albert R. Alexander issued proposals for establishing the *Southern Merchant*. Probably this paper never appeared, but by June, 1843, Albert R. Alexander was editing the Port Leon *Commercial Gazette*, published by R. H. Alexander. A devastating storm in September, 1843, destroyed Port Leon, and the town and its newspaper moved to Newport. Albert R. Alexander established the *Newport Patriot* about that time, but its later history is unknown. James Baker Carlisle published the *Newport Gazette* in 1846, and the *Wakulla Times* at Newport in 1849.

March 3, 1845, Florida entered the Union as a state, and the pioneer period was thus officially brought to a close.

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