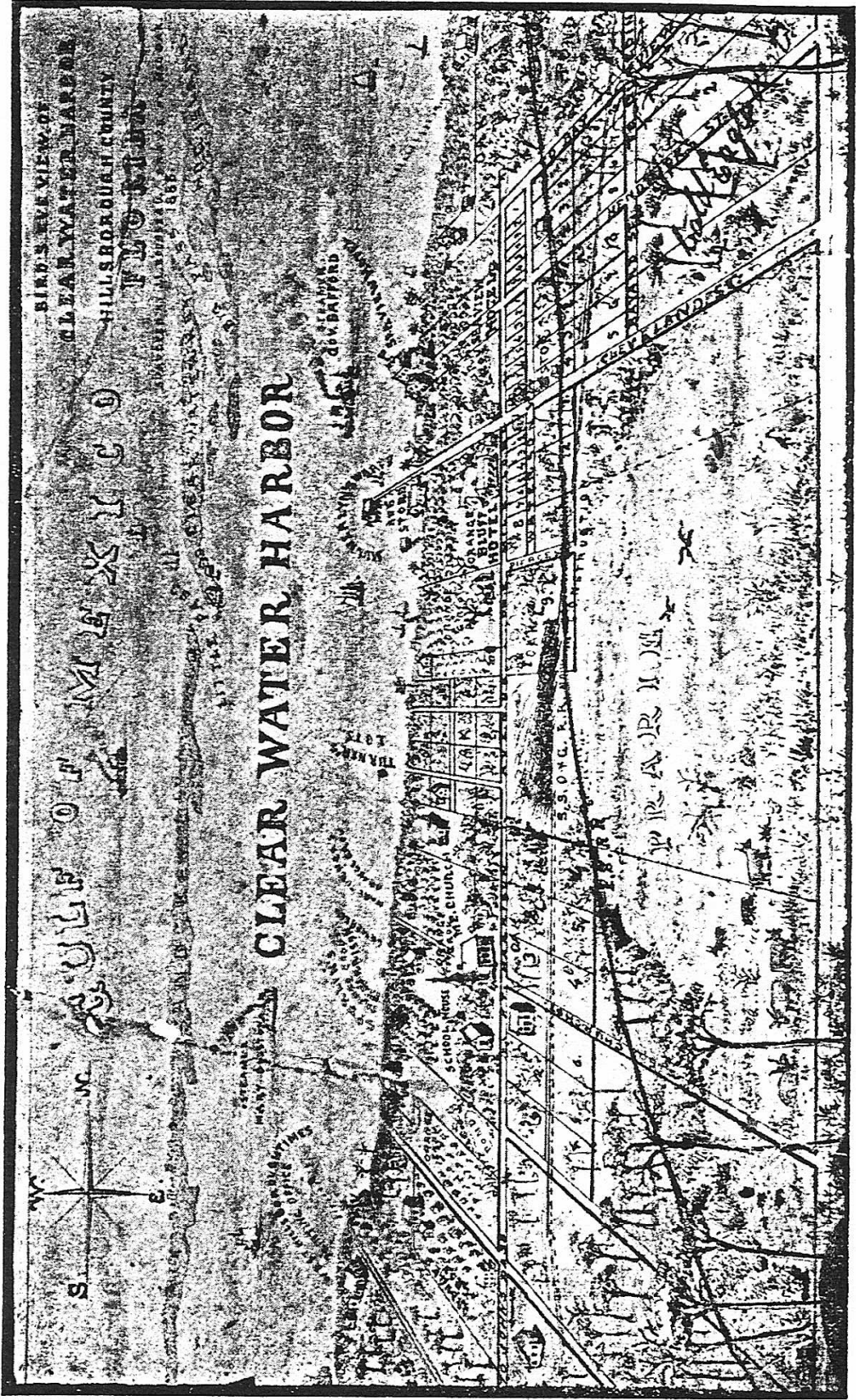


**A HISTORY OF
CLEARWATER
FLORIDA**

**BY THE
WOMAN'S CLUB
OF CLEARWATER**

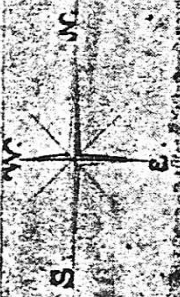




BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF
CLEAR WATER HARBOR
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
FLORIDA

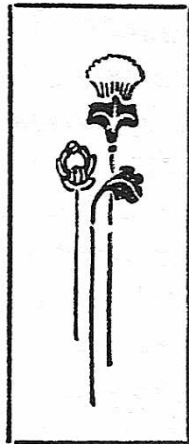
MEXICO

CLEAR WATER HARBOR



A HISTORY OF
CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

BY THE
WOMAN'S CLUB
OF CLEARWATER



HISTORY COMMITTEE

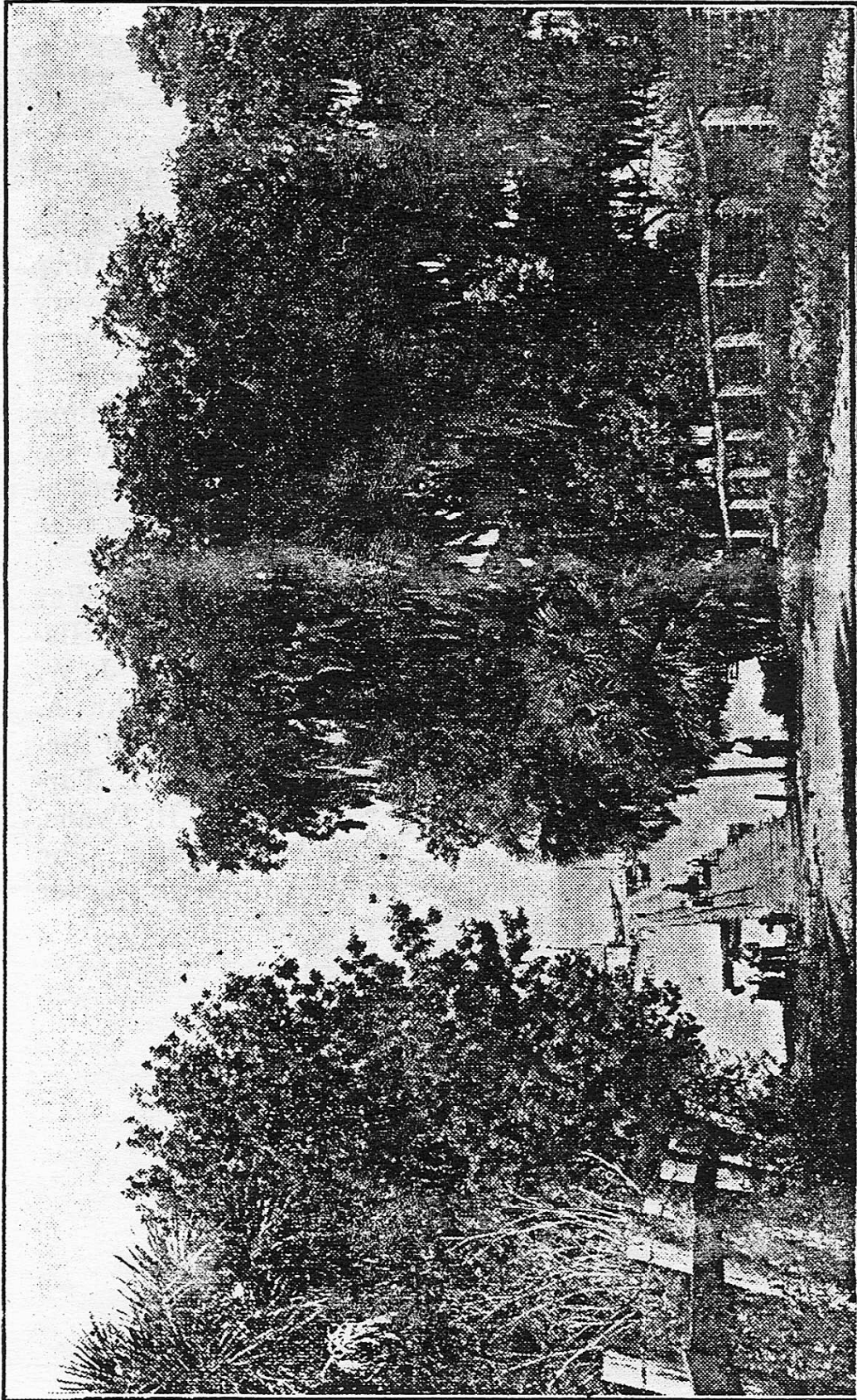
MRS. A. H. WYNKOOP, Chairman,
MRS. W. H. FREEMAN,
MRS. IRA NICHOLSON,
MRS. J. J. ELDRIDGE.

March, 1917
The Clearwater Evening Sun
Clearwater, Florida

PREFACE

This history has been gathered largely from people, very little printed matter being available. The committee has endeavored to verify every statement made. Sometimes, authorities have differed, making it difficult to do so. Months have been spent in collecting, verifying and compiling this history. It has been a task, but usually the task has been pleasant, and in the joy of accomplishment, we feel fully repaid for all our time and labor.

We are indebted for information to: The War Department of the United States, Fairbank's History of Florida, Mrs. Hannah Drew, Mrs. J. W. Rogers, Mrs. Detta P. Boynton, Mrs. John A. Duncan, Miss Margaret Duncan, Dr. Bethel McMullen, J. S. Taylor, Jr., Ira Nicholson, A. C. Turner, Leroy Brandon, T. J. Sheridan, C. H. Evans, and to the writings of the late W. F. Spurlin. The committee is especially grateful to A. C. Turner for assistance in many ways.



When Clearwater was First Settled—Foot of What is Now Cleveland Street

History of Clearwater, Florida

ON April 15, 1528, Panfilo De Narvaez first entered Clear Water Harbor. He had been appointed Governor of Florida by the King of Spain. With him came four hundred men in five ships. They found, on ascending the bluff, an Indian village, the central wigwam of which was large enough to hold three hundred persons. This was the council lodge of the great chief Ucita, of the Hirrihugas, whose domain extended along the west coast and eastward probably as far as the valley of the Peace River, embracing the present site of Tampa. The chief and his tribe received the Spaniards kindly, but indicated by signs that they wished them to go away.

After questioning the Indians about gold, Narvaez concluded to march northward in search of it. One vessel was sent to Cuba for supplies, the other four sailing northward, where Narvaez thought he could communicate with them when necessary. Before starting he had treated the Indians so cruelly that their enmity was incurred.

On the return of Narvaez' supply vessel from Cuba to Clear Water Harbor, a young officer was sent on shore. He was at once captured by the Indians, and Chief Ucita, aggravated by the atrocious acts of cruelty of the Spaniards to his people, ordered him bound hand and foot, and slowly burned on a pile of faggots. The torch was being applied, when the chief's daughter, Ulelah, threw herself at her father's feet, and begged for the young man's life.

Ortez was for a time spared, but Ulelah, fearing for his safety, decided to send him to her Indian lover, Mucoso, a young chief of another tribe. In the night, cutting the thongs that bound him, she led him into the forest pointing eastward. In his hand she placed a golden ornament, which she knew Mucoso would recognize as the pledge of their betrothal.

Ucita flew into a rage at the discovery of the escape of his prisoner, and suspected his daughter of aiding him. Mucoso

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

and Ulelah refused to surrender Ortez, and Chief Ucita would not allow them to marry.

Eleven years later, when Hernando De Soto landed in Tampa Bay, Mucoso visited him, bringing with him Ortez, who accompanied De Soto as an interpreter on his expedition, and died soon after crossing the Mississippi River. Tradition tells us that after Mucoso delivered Ortez to his own people, Ucita relented and Mucoso claimed his bride.

After this for many years the Indians were practically undisturbed in their occupation of this part of our State.

For two centuries the Spanish ruled Florida, then for twenty years the English, and afterward the Spanish again until the purchase of Florida by the United States in 1821.

The war between the United States and the Seminole Indians began in 1835, lasting seven years. This war cost the lives of more than fourteen hundred American soldiers. The Indians were finally driven to the Southern part of Florida and allowed to live there.

On April 2, 1841, a fort called Fort Harrison was established in Clear Water Harbor by the United States Government. The situation was selected primarily for its healthfulness, the sick and wounded soldiers were brought here from other forts to recuperate. An average of 340 commissioned officers and enlisted men of the 6th United States infantry were stationed at this fort during its occupancy. A large log building housed the soldiers, and this was situated in what is now Harbor Oaks, at the intersection of Druid Road and Orange Place. The officers quarters were situated where A. C. Turner's house now stands.

On November 1, 1841, the fort was abandoned, the end of the Seminole war coming early in 1842. About this time the United States offered, under what was called the Armed Occupation Act, 160 acres of land to everyone who would come to Florida to live, and James Stevens moved here with his family. The original entry of James Stevens embraced all the territory west of Fort Harrison Avenue, from Drew Street south to Jeffords Street. In 1848 Stevens received his title to the land from the Government.

In the north end of Clearwater a man by the name of Samuel Stevenson had settled in the early forties, obtaining his title from the Government in 1849. During the year 1848 a storm visited

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

this coast known to old settlers as the "gale of '48." Buildings were unroofed and great damage done. Samuel Stevenson at this time had a young orange grove set out in North Clear Water, near what is now the City Park. These trees were washed out by this storm, and becoming discouraged, he sold his property soon after to John C. White. Mr. Hart, who lived on Tampa Bay, bought the orange trees and planted them on his place. Some of them are still living.

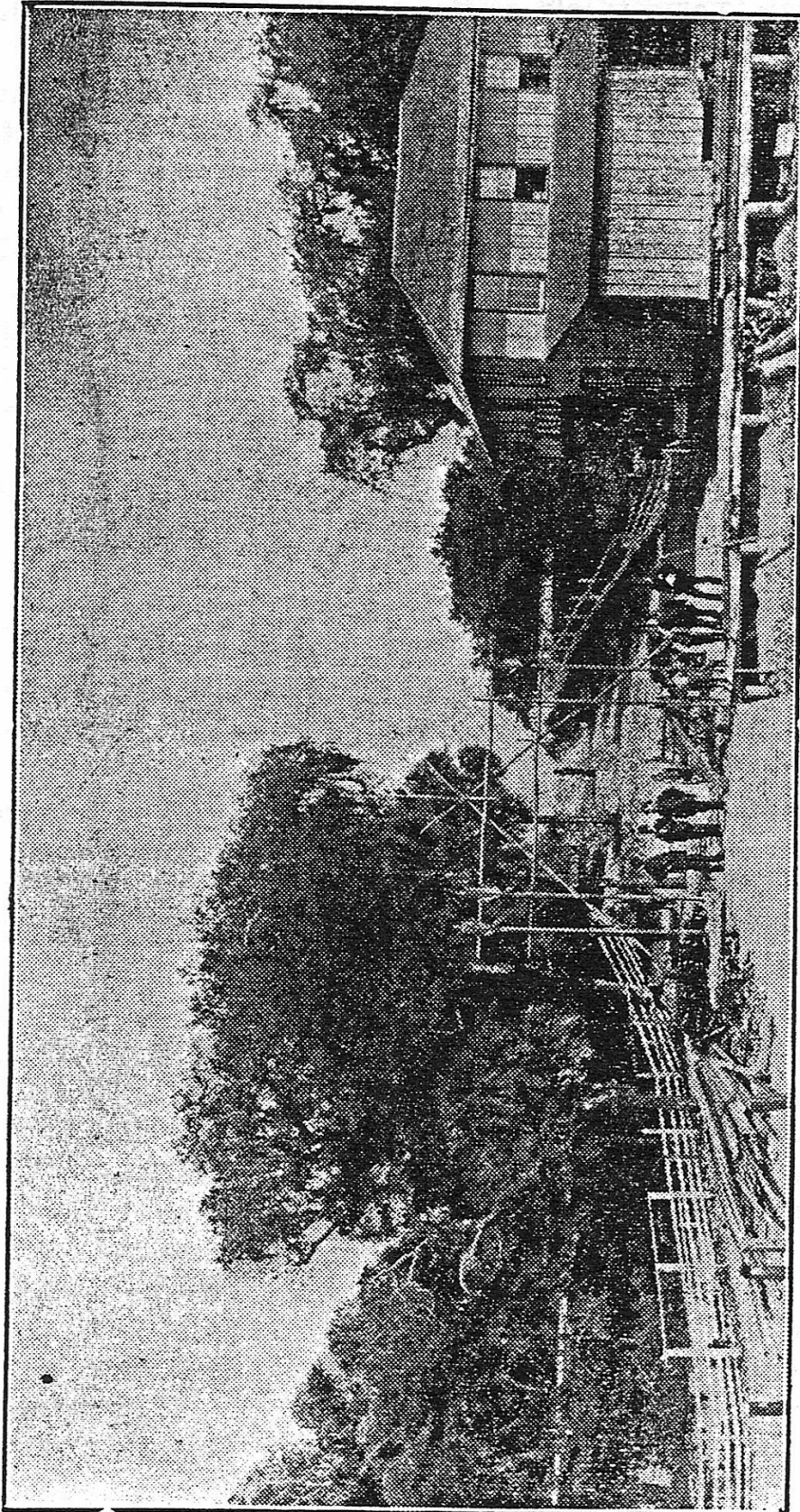
About this time, John S. Taylor, Sr. came to Clearwater from Brooksville on a visit. He did not consider the land as valuable as that near Brooksville, and had almost decided to return home without investing, when his friend, James Stevens, persuaded him to buy his property in the south end of Clearwater. The price paid for this land is interesting. Just before Mr. Taylor left home his negro cook (he was a slave owner) had tried to poison the family by putting nux vomica in the coffee, and Mr. Taylor, glad to get rid of the woman, gave her to Mr. Stevens for the 160 acres of land west of Fort Harrison Avenue. So the greater part of Clearwater once sold for a negro woman, and a very unamiable one at that.

In 1854 David B. Turner came to Clear Water Harbor with his family. He and Robert J. Whitehurst bought the property above mentioned of John S. Taylor, paying him \$800.00 for it. They divided it between them, the division line running between the South Ward School House and the Methodist Church. There were a few orange trees on Mr. Whitehurst's land, doubtless set out by James Stevens. These trees were in bearing, but they considered oranges worthless, as there was no market for them.

John C. White and family lived in the north end of Clear Water at this time. These early settlers lived in log houses; their furniture was made largely of lumber, the chairs with hide bottoms. The cooking was done either over an open fire in the yard, or over a fireplace, one pot and one frying pan serving all purposes.

Although the people lived in a very primitive way, there were many good things to eat. Deer and all wild game abounded, turkeys were easily killed, and fish in the Bay were so plentiful that the stories of them sound now like the Arabian Nights. During the Fall months, when the mullet were spawning, they often came into the Bay in such numbers, that at low tide the men

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER



Postoffice of Clear Water Harbor in 1886
Also Grocery Store and Printing Office of A. C. Turner

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

could walk out and kick them ashore; the women scooped up aprons full at a time. The roaring noise the fish made was often heard across the Bay.

Corn and sweet potatoes grew abundantly. The corn was ground in small hand mills, called steel mills. The husking, shelling and grinding of the corn for bread next day was often the work of the younger members of the household, and was considered a disagreeable task.

All mail matter at this time was brought from Tampa by anyone who happened to go there; they usually walked, and often letters and papers lay for days in some household before reaching their destination.

Sea Island cotton was raised to quite an extent and brought a good price. Robert J. Whitehurst, anxious to find a market for his oranges, loaded two wagon loads on a small sloop and took them by water to St. Marks, and to Tallahassee on the only Railroad then built in Florida, to sell them to the members of the Legislature then in session. He received a fair price for them. Nearly all the early settlers were engaged in raising and selling stock. Cattle were allowed to run wild in the forests and were marketed from Tampa.

In 1857 Rev. C. D. Nicholson came to this section and bought the land owned by John C. White in North Clearwater. He was sent here by the Methodist Church, and preached for many years in the churches of the vicinity. Robert J. Whitehurst, after a few years, sold his land to Mrs. Nancy Campbell, who had the first frame house built. About 1858, Wm. Campbell, son of Mrs. Nancy Campbell, erected the first store building.

The only communication with the outside world at this time was by boat from Cedar Keys or Tampa. In 1858 the mail began coming from Cedar Keys to Clearwater by steamer. This boat, called the Madison Packet, made the trip once a week. The postage at this time was paid at the office of delivery. David Turner was the first Postmaster, and the name of the office was Clear Water Harbor.

In 1861 a military company, called the Home Guards, was organized in Clearwater by James P. McMullen; many men from the surrounding country joined. Every man living in Clear Water became a member. They were David B. Turner, A. C. Turner,

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

J. D. Rogers and Wm. Campbell. This company, after a few months, was disbanded, the men joining other Florida companies.

During the Civil War several gun boats made raids on Clear Water, carrying away provisions and supplies of all kinds. Many hardships were endured here, as in other Southern States. The women and children had, to a great extent, to provide for themselves. It was imposisble to buy salt, and the half grown girls had to procure it by boiling salt water. A large wash pot was taken to the beach and kept full of water, a brush fire built under it, and by night, two or three quarts of white salt rewarded them for their labors.

During the war the Post Office was suspended, but was established again soon after the close, Robert J. Whitehurst being made Postmaster. The Post Office building was at this time near the present site of Belleair.

The high cost of living was a serious problem then as well as in the present day. Flour ranged from \$22.00 to \$27.00 a barrel; black sorghum molassess was eighty cents a gallon; Rio Coffee forty cents a pound, and kerosene oil sold at \$1.00 a gallon.

Early in the seventies Rev. C. S. Reynolds came to this section. He was quite a young man when he emigrated from New York State and founded the Tampa Herald in 1854. He was also engaged in the newspaper business in Ocala, Palatka and Key West. He came an invalid to Clear Water, through the advice of his physician, who thought that possibly his life might be spared two years longer by the change. He lived for many years, an honored resident of the town, dying in 1901, sincerely regretted by all who knew him. In July, 1873 Mr. Reynolds established the first newspaper printed in the sub peninsula. This paper was the Clear Water Times.

A selection from the Times of August 23, 1873, under the title, "Improvement and Resources of S. W. Florida" gives us an idea of life in Clear Water during this period:—

"Only a few settlers had established themselves on the peninsula found between Clear Water Harbor and the north arm of Tampa Bay, known as the Clear Water and old Tampa settlements. These were engaged almost exclusively in raising and selling stock. The late disastrous war, which made such a total change in the structure of Southern society, caused a large number of persons to seek new homes and engage in new employments. The business of

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

raising tropical fruits promised to remunerate those engaging in it, and those seeking proper locations were pleased with the advantages which this peninsula offered, surrounded on three sides by water, and with a large body of good rolling pine land, with means of transportation by the waters of the Gulf, settlers were led to seek its promising offers and commenced to come in.

"The writer of this article, when on his way to this place, made a short stay at Cedar Keys, and inquired what was the prospect of business between Cedar Keys and this coast. The reply was that it would possibly reach two skiff loads a week. Now we have two schooners plying between these places, and several smaller boats irregularly. We have good schools, churches well attended, and the most orderly population I have ever known.

"One fact speaks decidedly; within the past five years there has been but one Grand Jury case in this western section of Hillsboro County. Within five years more the young orange groves, which have been planted with other fruits that will be in bearing, will make the residents of this section independently rich. Our lands are good, and can be made rich. Our climate is almost unequalled. Our population is industrious and moral. These will insure prosperity. With the finest cotton, sugar cane, tropical fruits and rice, we have only to persevere for a few years and become independent."

Oranges were sent to Cedar Keys by boat to be shipped North, and were worth about fifteen dollars per thousand. They were shipped in barrels and were often carelessly packed. The first grape fruit to be shipped from Clear Water was owned by Mrs. David Turner. It was sent to Cincinnati, and did not sell for enough to pay the freight.

About 1880 M. C. Dwight came to this section, bought some property and built a small hotel near where the Presbyterian Church now stands. This was called the Orange Bluff Hotel and several cottages were later built in connection with it. A few tourists came by way of Cedar Keys and spent the winter here. The hotel burned a few years later, and this was a serious loss to the town.

In the early eighties Theodore Kamensky, a famous sculptor from Russia, came to make his home in Clear Water. Mr. Kamensky was a favorite of the Czar when in Russia, and sometimes received visits from him at his studio. The sculptor was at work

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

one day on a piece of statuary called "The First Step" (toward liberty) when the Czar came in, and was much displeased, asking him not to do work of this kind. Soon after this Mr. Kamensky left Russia, living several years in Kansas, and later making Clear Water his home for many years.

Several of his statues now have honored places in the art galleries of Russia. He became a naturalized citizen of the United States, and his work adorns several of the large cities of his adopted country. Some of his most notable statues are "The Little Sculptor," "The Widow and Child" and "The First Step." Mr. Kamensky built and owned the Sea View Hotel in Clear Water. A map of the town drawn by him in 1885 is of decided interest.

In 1888 a railroad was built through Clear Water. This was called the Orange Belt, and was at first a narrow gauge from Sanford to St. Petersburg. At this time about eighteen families lived here. There were no paved streets and no improvements. A public dock had been built at the foot of Cleveland Street.

In 1891 the town was incorporated, receiving a special charter in 1897. The first Mayor was James E. Crane, and the first City Clerk T. J. Sheridan.

The winter of 1894-95 was a notable one in the history of all Florida on account of the "Big Freeze." The first freeze came near the end of December '94, destroying the fruit and stripping the trees of foliage. This was followed by a second freeze in the early part of February '95, which was more disastrous than the first one had been. Many orange trees survived on the Pinellas Peninsula, but some orange growers became discouraged, and the following year saw a great increase in the acreage of strawberries and truck grown in this locality.

In 1895 the only paved streets were Cleveland St. from the Bay to the Orange Belt station, and Ft. Harrison Ave. from Cleveland St. to a point a little south of the Methodist Church. These were paved with shell obtained from an Indian mound near the Bay.

About this time the Orange Belt Rail Road became the property of the Plant System, and was made a standard gauge road.

During the summer of 1896 the Belleview Hotel was built in Belleair, two miles from Clearwater. It was opened for its first season in January, 1897. The building was then less than half its present size. As its patronage has increased, wing after

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

wing has been added. Its first golf course was a small 6-hole course with shell putting greens. Its golf links are now famous all over the United States, there being two 18-hole courses.

In 1896 Cleveland St. was widened from 40 to 80 feet, and in the same year, in connection with the Belleview development, a clay road was made from the end of the shell paving on South Fort Harrison Avenue to the entrance of the Belleview grounds.

The bicycle craze reached its height in Clearwater in 1898, and everyone, young and old, rode a wheel. A number of bicycle paths radiated from the town; some were paved with clay or shell, and some covered with pine straw. These humble trails were the pioneer ventures in road improvement in this locality. In 1897 an asphalt bicycle race track was constructed in Belleair, and bicycle races were held in November of that year. Some of the world's most noted riders spent the winter here, and trained and raced on this track. Among them were the German and Swiss champions, and several noted French riders.

In the year 1900 J. N. McClung built an ice factory, a much needed improvement, and in the spring of the following year a water main was run from the ice factory to the corner of Cleveland Street and Fort Harrison Avenue. This was the beginning of the water works system, which was further developed and operated by J. N. McClung, until the City purchased the plant from him in 1910. During the following year, the City voted to bond for \$40,000 for waterworks and sewerage.

The present site of the water works was purchased and two eight-inch wells were bored, other wells being added as needed. The water is plentiful and pure.

In 1902 a public dock and pavilion were built at the foot of Cleveland Street. These, in March, 1912, were donated to the City by the Clearwater Pier Co. There are two other public docks in the City, one in the south, and one in the north end of town.

In 1903 a telephone exchange was established, Mr. J. R. Davey financing the enterprise, and two years later an electric light franchise was granted to J. N. McClung. Fort Harrison Avenue was paved with phosphate rock at this time also.

In September 1905 a Board of Trade was organized. This organization has alternately flourished and languished ever since.

Clearwater's largest fire ocured at four o'clock on the morning of June 24, 1910, the entire business block on the north side of

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

Cleveland Street, between Fort Harrison Avenue and Osceola Street being burned. Soon after this our Fire Department was organized, and in 1911 the new City Hall and Fire Department headquarters were ready for occupancy. In 1914 the City purchased adequate fire equipment at large expense.

In May, 1911 the bill dividing Hillsboro County passed the State Legislature; Pinellas County was formed, and Clearwater was made the County seat. In January, 1912 a site for a Court House was donated by the City. Pinellas County, though the smallest in the State, with only 300 square miles, is one of the leading orange and grapefruit districts in Florida. Its shipments of these fruits totals a million boxes a year.

In December, 1912 the County voted a bond issue for \$370,000 for hard surfaced roads, and later, in 1916, \$715,000 for brick roads. These roads are now nearly completed.

In 1910 Congress appropriated \$29,000 for the purpose of dredging Clearwater and Boca Ciega Bays to Tampa Bay. The work was completed in 1915, giving a five foot channel at low tide from Cleveland Street dock to Tampa Bay.

One of the chief adornments of Clearwater is the beautiful brick Library built in 1916, and donated to the City by Andrew Carnegie. A library association was formed in 1911 by some of the leading citizens of the town. Starting with about four hundred volumes, it was a subscription library until 1915, when it was made free to all residents of Clearwater. The Town Council purchased the lot for the new building, and made provision for the maintenance of the Library.

From this small beginning has grown our beautiful and commodious Library, of which the citizens of the City are justly proud.

In September, 1912 the City voted a bond issue of \$40,000 for paving, pier construction and Island Park improvements. Two years later, another bond issue was carried for \$75,000 for street paving and sanitary sewerage.

For several years the public-spirited women of Clearwater had been agitating the subject of a Hospital for our town; they had also, by various means, raised a sum of money which was the nucleus of a hospital building fund; when in March, 1914 Mr. M. F. Plant offered to endow the hospital with \$100,000, provided \$20,000 be raised by the citizens of the town. By strenuous effort this \$20,000 was raised—the City contributing \$2,000—and the

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

building was completed in 1915. It is one of the most beautiful and up-to-date hospitals in Florida. Situated in beautiful grounds, overlooking the Bay, it is an ideal place, the only drawback being that the people of Clearwater are so healthy that they seldom require the services of a hospital.

In 1914 a second railroad was built through Clearwater; the Tampa & Gulf Coast Rail Road. Both this line and the Atlantic Coast Line give excellent service to the people of this vicinity.

The City owns two parks, Island Park and the Water Works Park, in which improvements are being made each year.

In 1915 the Clearwater Golf Club, a local association, was organized, and has a membership of about thirty. The course is situated about two and one half miles from town on the Safety Harbor road. They have nine holes in operation, and a club house, and another nine holes under construction.

In 1916 some of our public spirited citizens, thinking the City needed a new charter, called a mass meeting at which a charter board was nominated and afterward elected. These men labored long and faithfully, and evolved an excellent charter which was submitted to the citizens. A special election was held and the new charter carried by a good majority. One of the features of the new charter is municipal suffrage for women. A number of women voted for the first time on October 23, 1916, for a \$10,000 bond issue to aid in building a bridge across Clearwater Bay to the Island on the Gulf. The election went 131 to 9 in favor of the issue. Between twenty and thirty women voted, Miss Sue Barco being the first woman to cast her ballot.

The new bridge, which is in course of construction at the present time, is nearly two miles long. It starts from Seminole Street near the Water Works Park in the north end of town. This easy access to the Gulf beach adds greatly to the pleasure of both residents and tourists. The surf here is very safe, there being no undertow, and surf bathing may be indulged in both summer and winter.

The residents of Clearwater are a live and progressive set of people, as is evidenced by the many improvements that have been made in recent years. They are also a cosmopolitan people, natives of nearly every state in the Union living here, and many foreign countries are represented.

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

The resident population of Clearwater is about three thousand. During the tourist season the population is doubled. Our town has excellent, up-to-date stores of all kinds; five hotels and many boarding houses; two well conducted picture shows and two garages. There are six citrus fruit packing houses, two banks, one cigar factory, two retail and wholesale fish houses, one bottling works, one novelty works, two lumber yards, one electric shop, and many other minor business concerns. At present a brick block, five stories high, equipped with elevator, steam heat and janitor service, designed for offices and apartments, is nearing completion. The fifth floor will be used by our Lodges. Before the year closes the Bank of Clearwater will move into their fine new bank building, now in course of construction.

There are a number of beautiful and luxurious homes in our city; many of the residences are situated on the Bay front with a view over the ever beautiful water of the Bay and Gulf.

In regard to the healthfulness of our town, nature has done a great deal to make it one of the most sanitary cities in the State of Florida. Situated on a bluff thirty feet high, overlooking the Bay, its elevation affords it excellent drainage, and makes adequate sewerage possible. This, with the fine work of the Board of Health, the support of the City Council, and the co-operation of the Woman's Club, has brought our town to a standard where it enjoys more than a state-wide reputation for cleanliness and good health.

The dairies furnishing milk in the city are in first class condition. A recent test shows the bacteria count far below that required by ordinance, with butter fat up to standard. The City Health Officer makes a careful inspection of all places where food stuffs are prepared and sold. Streets are cleaned and garbage collected every day.

The City keeps in its employ a competent man whose whole time is spent in looking after the cleanliness and well-being of the town. One of our residents who has traveled in almost every State in the Union says, "Clearwater is the cleanest town I have ever seen." A man who often comes to our city remarked the other day, "When I drive through Clearwater I expect at every corner to meet the Gold Dust Twins, for the town always looks as though they had just finished work."

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

CHURCHES

During the early years of Clear Water Harbor there was no church within easy reach of the people, but this did not prevent them from attending services. They walked miles to hear the word of God, and the ministers of that day seldom had any other way to get to their appointments than on foot. It was not an unusual occurrence for Rev. C. D. Nicholson to walk to Tampa to preach, and receive no remuneration for it. Rev. C. S. Reynolds organized the first Baptist church in Clear Water. With the assistance of the people he built the log church which stood where the cemetery is now located. He was, as well as a minister, an editor, and both by his voice and pen made a decided impress upon the people of the State.

This little log church, called a Baptist church, but claimed by all, irrespective of creed, was greatly loved by the people. It was the social and religious center of the community. The Sunday School was a union one. One member of this school is proud of not having missed a Sunday in seven years. The faces of men and women brighten as they speak of the good times enjoyed in this old church. When we consider that the ministers gladly gave their services, as the people were unable to pay them, and that the people came miles to hear the gospel, we do not wonder that many blessings were received.

Finally, the Methodists, wishing to have a church of their own, began to raise money for it. A. C. Turner gave the lot, several members gave their work, and others boarded the men at work on the church free of charge. In 1885 the church was finished and dedicated, Rev. W. H. Parker being the pastor in charge. Mrs. David Turner assumed all the indebtedness of the church in order that it might be dedicated.

The faithfulness and devotion to her church of this good woman deserves special mention. She set aside one orange tree, the proceeds of which were given each year for missions, this often amounting to quite a large sum. Her home was ever open to any ministers who come to Clear Water to visit, and many people speak of her kindness and neighborliness in times of trouble.

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

In 1887 Mr. H. C. Markley and A. C. Turner gave the lot for the Episcopal Church, and it was built in the same year. Rev. Mr. Noyle was the first rector.

The Baptists feeling the need of a new church, built one in what is now Milton Park, at about this time. Mr. Williams gave the lot, and the church was built by the members.

The first Presbyterian Church of Clearwater was organized in 1891 by Rev. Luther H. Wilson. The lot for the church was donated by Mr. John R. Davey and his partners in business. The building was erected in 1895. There were seventeen members at the time of organization.

The Baptists worshipped in the church near Belleair for about ten years, but feeling the need of a more central location, they purchased a lot on North Fort Harison Avenue and built a church in 1906.

The Church of Christ at Clearwater was organized in 1907 when four or five members began to meet from house to house each Lord's day. For the last two years they have been meeting in the auditorium of the South Ward School building. There are about twenty members. They have purchased a desirable lot and expect to build in the near future.

In January 1916 a number of students of Christian Science met for the first time to conduct services. A short time afterwards a preliminary organization was effected, and rooms engaged in the Williamson Apartment building. The formal organization, complying with the requirements of the Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Mass., was recognized as a properly qualified Christian Science Society in December, 1916. An increase in attendance necessitated a move to more commodious quarters, and the entire second floor of the Bank of Clearwater building was leased and a number of improvements made to adapt the rooms for the purposes required.

There are also five churches of different denominations supported by the colored people of Clearwater.

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

SCHOOLS

The first school which the children of Clear Water attended was held in a small building east of the town, near Mr. Sever's home. Geo. R. Kennedy was the teacher. The first school house was built by John S. Taylor, Sr., near this place. Each scholar paid \$1.50 per month for tuition, and the teacher boarded around.

During the winter of 1873 Mrs. Jennie R. Plumb taught the first public school, in the little log Baptist church where the cemetery is now located. For a term of three months she received the sum of \$100.00. Mrs. Plumb, who was a sister of Rev. C. S. Reynolds, taught in Clear Water for several years, and was much beloved by all who knew her.

A selection from the Clear Water Times of April 18, 1874, gives us an idea of the schools at that period:—"The examination at the termination of the second quarter of the school at this place, taught by Mrs. Plumb, was held on the 8th inst. The house was nicely decorated, and a beautiful arbor was erected a short distance from the door. The pupils, nearly thirty in number, were all present, together with the patrons, County Superintendent and many others. We were particularly pleased to see Mr. Blanton with most of his pupils in attendance. More than a hundred persons were present, and yet the best of order prevailed.

"Owing to the illness of the teacher for two days previous to the examination, the pupils did not have the advantage of a thorough review and careful preparation for the occasion, and yet their readiness in recitation and prompt answers to general questions indicated thoroughness and an appreciation of the general rules in their studies. Several very creditable compositions were read by the young ladies, and the exercises were enlivened by singing several beautiful songs.

"The exercises commenced at an early hour and closed a little after one o'clock, when a table was set in the cool shade of the arbor whereon a bountiful and delicious dinner was spread, to which all were invited. Then followed a season of quiet social enjoyment. The Superintendent kindly complimented the teacher and her pupils, acknowledging that he was greatly pleased with the exercises

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

and the general deportment of the school. Encouraging words were spoken by others."

Finally the need for a larger building and one better suited to the needs of the children was felt, and a school house was built in 1883 where the South Ward Primary School now stands, Wm. Campbell giving the land for the building. This was enlarged in 1888, and later in 1903 when it became a graded school.

The South Ward Primary School building was completed in 1906, and was thought to be adequate for many years to come, but in 1912 greater school facilities became necessary, and the High School building was erected. The members of our school board were anxious to have a thoroughly up-to-date building, and visited the schools in several of the leading cities of the United States in order to get all the best and latest ideas for school houses. The system of ventilation is especially to be commended.

The regular high school course includes manual training and domestic science. Under the superintendency of Prof. J. I. Reece our teachers are doing most excellent work. It is a source of pride to every resident of Clearwater that our High School is on the accredited list of Southern high schools, thus making it possible for our graduates to enter college without examination or condition.

In 1915 a Primary School building was erected in the North Ward, for the convenience of patrons in that end of town, making three substantial, well-equipped schools buildings in Clearwater.

The colored people have a graded school with excellent teachers in charge, and in 1915 Mr. Richard C. Lake gave them a well-furnished domestic science building, called Pinellas Institute, of which they are very proud.

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

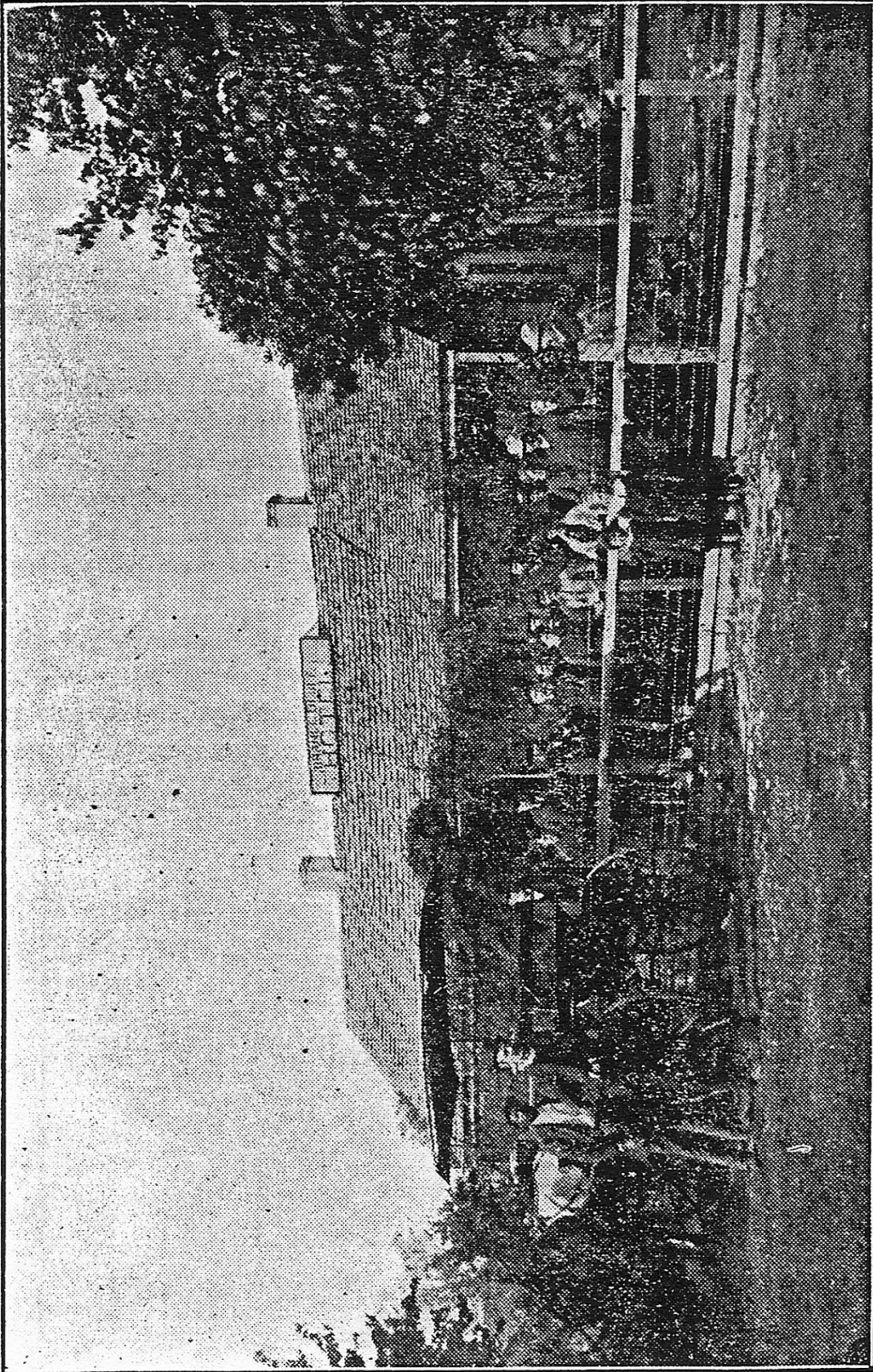
NEWSPAPERS

In July, 1873, Rev. C. S. Reynolds established the first newspaper published in Clearwater. It was a small four-page paper, nine by thirteen inches, and was printed on a hand press invented and made by Mr. Reynolds. This paper was published for only a year or two, and there was no paper in this vicinity until 1884, when A. C. Turner began the publication of the West Hillsboro Times. This paper was continued until 1892, when Mr. Turner sold the plant to R. J. Morgan, who moved it to St. Petersburg.

In 1894, Rev. C. S. Reynolds founded the West Hillsboro Press. Owing to ill health, he was compelled to resign the management, and in 1896 Leroy Brandon became owner and manager. Later he sold to R. W. Converse, who edited it for about four years. A stock company was then formed, with C. H. Evans as editor, the paper taking the name of the "Clearwater News." Mr. Evans is now editor and proprietor of the News.

In May, 1914, W. B. Powell published the first issue of the Clearwater Evening Sun. It ranks among the best dailies in the State. In 1916 D. O. Batchelor purchased the Sun, and is at present its editor and publisher. Both the daily and weekly papers contribute largely to the success and well-being of Clearwater.

FLORIDA COUNTY HISTORY
HISTORY OF CLEARWATER



Clearwater's First Hotel and Some of its First Citizens—Taken in 1886

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

The W. C. T. U. was organized in 1885 by Mrs. Woodruff, a sister of Rev. C. S. Reynolds. Mrs. Woodruff was the first president of the Clearwater Union. The purpose and standards of the W. C. T. U. are known to all, and although in the beginning this Union met with many discouragements, it has, for more than thirty years, supported loyally every effort that had for its object the improvement of the community life. It was the pioneer woman's organization in Clearwater.

The Ladies Improvement Society flourished about the year 1901. Among the enterprises for the public welfare in which this society was interested was the building of dressing rooms on the public dock, for the accommodation of bathers who did not have access to a private dock. Much of its work was directed toward securing a cleaner town.

The U. D. C. Chapter was organized in March, 1913. Its object is the preservation of the true history of the South.

The Mother's Club was formed in January, 1913. Its chief object has been to secure intelligent co-operation of the school and home. Some of the enterprises it has fostered have been successful and good has been accomplished. Others have only partly succeeded as yet. Some of the things for which the Club has worked are better sanitary conditions in the school buildings, medical examination, supplementary reading, a special teacher for backward children, and beautification of the school grounds.

Early in June, 1914, the ladies of Clearwater were asked to meet at the house of Mrs. W. B. Powell to talk over the need of organizing a Woman's Club for civic betterment. This meeting resulted in forming such a club, and later in the month twenty ladies met and organized with Mrs. Powell as president. Some of the enterprises of the Club are improvement of sanitary conditions of the town in various ways, park improvements, planting shade trees, establishing and maintaining a Rest Room, securing Vital Statistics and a Probation Officer for the County, aiding in united charity work, cleaning of cemetery, obtaining competent man to lead in Boy Scout work and arranging moving pictures for children.

HISTORY OF CLEARWATER

LODGE DIRECTORY

F. & A. M.

Clearwater Lodge No. 127, F. & A. M. is the oldest secret organization in the city. The charter from the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the State of Florida was dated January 20, 1892.

I. O. O. F.

Gulf Lodge No. 12, I. O. O. F. was instituted August 20, 1896.

O. E. S.

Queen Esther Chapter No. 4, O. E. S. was organized August 8, 1899, by the District Deputy and twenty-five members. At present there are over eighty members, and it is one of the most prosperous orders in the city.

K. of P.

Sunrise Lodge No. 70, K. of P. was instituted March 11, 1901 with twenty-seven members. Present membership is one hundred and thirty-seven.

W. O. W.

Pinellas Camp No. 535, W. O. W. instituted September 16, 1907.

Sunset Tent No. 6, Knights of the Maccabees of the World instituted April, 1914.

Loyal Order of Moose was organized July, 1914 with fifty-five charter members.

Clearwater Hive No. 5, Woman's Benefit Association of the Maccabees was organized August 5, 1914.

An Orange Club was organized in Clearwater in 1916.

PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Clearwater Pythian Band was organized in 1908 as the Clearwater Concert Band with twenty-two members. F. W. Craven was leader. Four years ago the organization became the U. R. Pythian Band, the only one in the State. The present membership is twenty-four, with a library of standard music worth about \$400.00, two complete sets of uniforms and other band property valued at several hundred dollars. Distant trips to other parts of the State have been made, and the Band has created a good impression wherever they have been heard. F. W. Craven deserves much praise for his long years of service as leader of the Band. The present leader, J. P. Sutter, is also a capable and popular musician.

In 1913 Mr. W. W. Robins organized the Boy Scouts of Clearwater. Mr. J. M. Barco next took up the work, and at his death Rev. Kerrison Juniper became Scout Master. Excellent work was accomplished under his leadership. A movement is now on foot to obtain the services of a trained worker to take charge of the Scout work in Pinellas County.

The Camp Fire Girls of Clearwater were first organized in 1916. Their Guardian is Mrs. F. B. McMullen. Her work with the girls has been most gratifying to the parents. At present there are twenty-nine members.