

The Adventures of Charles Pierce in **Broward County One Hundred Years Ago** **Part I**

When Charles Pierce died in 1939, he left a massive manuscript describing his experiences in southeast Florida until the coming of the railroad. In 1970, a summarized version of the period before 1896 was published as Pioneer Life in Southeast Florida. What follows are excerpts from Pierce's manuscript which relate his adventures in what is now Broward County. For further details see "Behind the Scenes" in this issue.

THE HOUSES OF REFUGE

Why did the Government build these houses of refuge for shipwrecked sailors? At the time these houses were built (1876) the entire East Coast was what one might term a howling wilderness. In fact, with the exception of the very few settlers on Biscayne Bay and Lake Worth, and they were sixty miles apart; the coast line of this part of Florida was unchanged from the time Ponce de Leon discovered it, and sailors wrecked along this unsettled coast had little chance to leave it except by passing vessels on the sea, and on many parts of the coast were in danger of starvation, if they failed to salvage food from the wrecked vessel. A case of this kind happened in a hurricane of October 1873. A vessel was wrecked about half way between Biscayne Bay and New River. She went all to pieces when she hit the beach. All the crew landed on shore safely, but were unable to find any food cast up by the waves, and the only water they could find was brackish in the salt marsh back of the beach ridge. Their life boats had been lost and they knew not in what direction there might be a human habitation. Their only hope as they saw it was to signal a passing steamer, but the weather kept unfavorable, the sea rough, and no steamer came near enough to see the small piece of canvas waving from the end of a spar erected on the beach.

For the first two days there was plenty of fish washed up by the big seas of the hurricane, but they had no way of keeping them, and a few days later when found by a man that had walked up the beach from Biscayne Bay, the half starved

crew were existing on spoiled fish.

The story of their hardships and near death was told in the New York papers, and when brought to the attention of the Government, Sumner I. Kimball, Superintendent of the Life Saving Service, ordered the immediate construction of five houses of refuge for shipwrecked people on the East Coast of Florida.

AN EXPEDITION IN THE HILLSBORO COUNTRY

Billie Addison spent most of the previous summer [1876] on the lake [Lake Worth], and when not out hunting stopped at Charlie Moore's [on present-day Palm Beach]. Billie's father was a cattle man on the west coast. After the [October] hurricane Billie went home. Returning in December he said his father wanted him to see if he could locate a good cattle range along to the west of the coast country, but there was no way to get there as far as anyone knew at that time; no way to cross the wide swamp between the high land west of the lake and the flat woods a mile or so farther west, so he made up a party to explore the country west of the Hillsborough [Hillsboro] river, its inlet located some 16 miles south of the Orange Grove House of Refuge [at present-day Delray Beach].

Billie persuaded Dexter Hubel and Frank Andrews to go with him on this exploring expedition in an unknown country, and borrowed the Pierces' little boat *Dolly* in which to make the trip. Dexter was not new to the woods, having worked in the forests of Michigan as a lumberman, but Frank Andrews was a

city boy, born and reared in the city of Brooklyn, N.Y., and had never been in the wilds of an unsettled country until he came to Lake Worth.

They started on this trip sometime in the month of December and were gone so long without any tidings from them the Pierce family became worried as week after week went by and no word at all came from them. Of course there was no way for the young men to communicate with the people at the station [House of Refuge] as to their whereabouts or of when they expected to return, but it was long past time for their return. Mr. [Hannibal D.] Pierce [father of Charles W. Pierce and keeper of the Orange Grove House of Refuge] said one night, after a day of smooth sea and a west wind, "It begins to look as if we have lost our *Dolly* as well as the boys that sailed her."

One day, however, about five weeks since they had started on their trip, Frank Andrews came walking in from the south. He had left Dexter and Billie with the *Dolly* in Hillsborough inlet where they had put in on account of bad weather. Frank said he was full up of this kind of cruising and camping in Florida, for the time being, and was sure happy to be so near home again. It took some grit and a lot of determination on his part to undertake that walk of 16 miles on the soft beach sand. "But," said he, "I was ready to undertake most anything that would give me a chance to sleep in a real bed and have regular food once more." He then launched into telling the story of this remarkable voyage. It took him hours to tell of the many haps and mishaps, but mostly mishaps that occurred on this trip into the unknown woods of the Hillsborough.



Charles W. Pierce, ca. 1920s (photo courtesy of Mrs. Robert Powell).

When they started down the coast they arrived at Hillsborough inlet alright and in good time. Went up the river about a mile where they made camp and there prepared for a long tramp to the west and south through woods that at that time had never been explored by white men. Each carried his bedding in a roll over his shoulder, and in the roll was each man's share of what they thought would be enough food for three or four days. They intended to be back at the boat within three days at the most, perhaps sooner, and they could not afford to carry food for a longer time as it would make their load too heavy.

Leaving the camp early in the morning they made their way in a westerly direction, or as nearly so as the thick scrub would permit, through woods and swamp, wading ponds and tramping over spruce pine ridges until at last they were stopped by a dense cypress swamp, extending to the north and south as far as they could see. It was near sundown when they arrived on the edge of this swamp so they made camp for the night. When Frank removed his shoes that night he found his feet in bad shape with blisters and raw spots caused by walking through mud and water all day. It was decided to remain in camp next day to give Frank's feet a chance to heal, meantime Billie and Dexter would scout over the surrounding country; this they did throughout the most of the following

day without finding anything suitable as a good cattle range.

The next morning Frank said he was again ready for the trail, and they started, as they supposed, traveling south. This direction they followed for the entire day, camping that night on the edge of a deep pond, surrounded on three sides by a heavy growth of rank saw palmetto; on the west side of the pond was a dense cypress head. They cleared a place in the palmettoes large enough for their camp and prepared to spend their third night.

There was not a great deal of preparation needed to spend the night as there was little to prepare. The main thing was, of course, a good supply of fat light-wood for the campfire, enough to keep a big fire going all night. The fire they considered a necessity in that wild place where varmints had not learned to be afraid of man. What was there to be afraid of? Well, there were panthers, snakes and alligators, any one of which might attack them in the darkness of the night, but with a good fire burning there was no danger; so a large supply of fat pine was collected, enough to last the night through; then supper, and when that was finished there was nothing left for breakfast, the food was all gone.

They had expected to help out their supply of grub by killing game, but so far they had not killed anything. They had only one gun, a double barrel muz-

zle loader shotgun, and Frank had insisted on carrying it. He was new to the great outdoors, and was a little afraid of what they might come upon, and liked the feel of a gun in his hands. He was not much of a marksman either, and up to this time had missed everything he had shot at.

They sat around the campfire for some time after supper, talking of their chances of getting back to the boat early the next day. Billie Addison said, "We've just got to get back to the boat soon tomorrow or be near starved; after all this time since we left the boat we have not killed a thing so far, and the chances of killing something to eat tomorrow is mighty slim." "Billie, do you know how far we are from the coast?" asked Dexter. "No, I don't," he answered, "and what's more I don't know how far south we have traveled, but one thing is certain, if we keep going east we will come to the ocean after awhile, we can't miss that, and then we can tell how far we are from the boat, so the only thing to do is to go east when we leave here in the morning." "Meantime what are we going to do for something to eat?" was Frank's next question. "That remains to be seen, do the best we can, I reckon," was the answer that Billie gave this most important question, and he continued, "It's either kill something fit to eat or get back to the boat with as little delay as possible."

More wood was piled on the fire, then the boys rolled up in their blankets and tried to get some sleep. Although very tired and worn by their hard day's tramp through unknown woods and swamps, sleep did not come quickly as they were worried about what the morrow might bring. And then too, the noises of the night on every hand made Frank nervous. The big bull frogs in the pond kept up a continual "cronk, cronk" in a deep bass; now and then a high pitched "peep" followed by a "plunk" as a small frog jumped from the bank into the pond. Some owls kept up a continual "hooting" back in the cypress, and as Frank was almost asleep his ear caught the sound of a long drawn wail or scream far to the southwest; it sounded almost human. He raised up suddenly and called out, "Billie, what is that?" "That," answered Billie, "was a panther away back in the cypress; go to sleep; he will not bother us while the fire burns, and besides he is hardly likely to come near us for he is at least half a mile from our camp."

Billie was an old hand in the Florida woods and swamps; the cry of a panther did not disturb him in the least. Frank, seeing Billie so indifferent about the matter, rolled up in his blanket again and was soon sound asleep.

No untoward event happened to this little band of adventurers throughout the night. When the fire burned low, first Billie and then Dexter got up and piled on more wood. At last daylight, and the sun

shining over the tops of the eastern woods, woke the boys from a sound but troubled sleep. A drink from the pond, blankets rolled up, and they were off; going straight towards the rising sun.

After about an hour's tramping they came out of the swamp and onto a high spruce pine ridge where the walking was easy compared to the swamps they had just passed through. The woods were fairly open and they could pick their way between the bunches of oak scrub and saw palmetto. After passing through this they came to tall pine timber, and as they walked out into the more open woods, they saw ahead of them, about half a mile distant, a strip of hammock reaching north and south as far as they could see. Over the top of this hammock they saw the tops of palmetto trees growing in the beach hammock about two miles farther on.

"Boys," said Billie, after a long look over the country ahead, "that hammock is on the edge of a swamp that extends from Hillsborough to New River. We have only to follow the edge of this swamp in a northerly direction for a few miles to find our boat and camp on the Hillsborough River. I think we are about three miles south of its inlet."

Just as Billie finished speaking a very large flock of wading birds rose up from the swamp in front of them, went a short distance and settled back in the marsh. When the boys saw these birds, many of which were white ibis, they were wild to kill some, that meant something to eat right now. They at once commenced to make their way through the hammock border of the swamp. They had a hard time of it; the hammock was dense, sometimes crawling under, then over the tops of bushes covered with great masses of morning glory and moon flower vines. It was hard work, especially so as they had nothing to eat for the past 18 hours.

When they came out of the hammock they found the marsh quite open and birds there by the thousands. Frank said there were millions, anyway there were a lot of them. There were herons of all kinds, big and little, white and blue, a large flock of gannets or wood ibis, and white ibis (curlew) in immense flocks. When the boys came out of the hammock the nearest saw them and immediately took wing, all the others followed and commenced to circle around overhead. Frank thought all he had to do was shoot at the mass without aiming, there were so many he couldn't miss, so he fired both barrels in quick succession and never a bird dropped. The birds were flying away; Frank commenced reloading his gun. Just as he was ramming down the last wadding on the shot, Billie and Dexter called out, "Hurry, hurry, Frank, they are coming back, right overhead. Shoot quick." Frank became greatly excited, raising his gun quickly he again fired both barrels and made a clean miss

as before. Then the birds made another circle back; Billie and Dexter yelled at him, "Hurry and load, Frank! They are coming back again." Frank started to load the gun and found he did not have a ramrod to push the wadding down on the powder and shot. Then he remembered that he was in such a rush and the boys kept calling at him to hurry and shoot, he had forgotten to remove the ramrod and shot it away. So that settled the question of killing any birds, for that time at least.

They worked their way back to the high pine ridge and wearily walked north. About three o'clock in the afternoon they arrived at the Hillsborough River and half an hour later reached the boat where they found all as they had left it some days before, and you can bet they were not long in starting a fire and cooking something to eat.

They spent the rest of the day and night eating and sleeping. While Billie and Frank did the cooking Dexter worked on a new ramrod for the gun. When they awoke next morning there was a fine west wind blowing and the sea was smooth, so they up sail and started for Miami, some 38 miles down the coast.

DR. HENSHALL'S VISIT

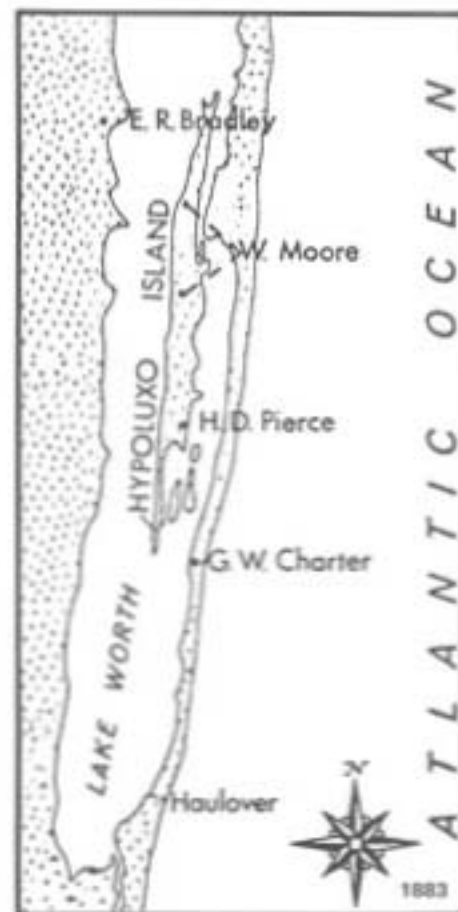
Early one morning [in 1879] Mr. [Hannibal D.] Pierce came in the house [the Pierce homestead on Hypoluxo Island in Lake Worth] and said, "There's a party of hunters camped on the west shore of the lake right across from our landing; after breakfast I am going over to see who they are." After breakfast he went. Charlie [Pierce, referring to himself in the third person] went along too, for he wanted to see who the hunters were that had come to use his hunting grounds.

When they landed and introduced themselves they found the hunters were a Doctor [James A.] Henshall, and four young men all from Kentucky. They had come to Florida on a health trip as the doctor said, to get away from the Kentucky frying pan, which he claimed had upset the digestion of his four companions. Meantime they were hunting and fishing for amusement, and to help out their supply of food which they found necessary when so far away from a store.

They were cruising in a little wall-side cat-boat named *Blue Wing*. Now their boat was only large enough to barely hold passengers and dunnage, when there was any cooking or sleeping to be done they had to go on shore to do it. They had a good sized "A" tent and camped in comfort whenever a good site was located.

Dr. Henshall and party camped around the shore of the lake at the south end for about a week; in the meantime the doctor walked the beach to Miami, in company with two of his companions, stopping

over at Lauderdale for a visit at the Indian village near the headwaters of New River. The two young men left in camp had rather a lonesome time waiting for the doctor's return and were frequent visitors to the Pierce homestead. When Dr. Henshall returned from his tramp down the beach, camp was struck, and the little *Blue Wing* sailed away on her return trip up Indian River. Sometime in 1884 Charlie Pierce called at the Potter homestead [on present-day Palm Beach] and found George Potter hard at work making pen drawings for Dr. Henshall's book, *Camping and Cruising in Florida*, which was an account of his trip in the *Blue Wing*, and a later cruise in a schooner named *Rambler*, down the east coast. Dr. Henshall in this book has given an accurate description of the country and names of all the people as he found them at that time living on the lake.



HYPOLUXO ISLAND

The map above shows the homesteads of the Pierce family and other early settlers on Hypoluxo Island at the southern end of Lake Worth in 1883. The February 1877 view of the original Pierce home, at right, is one of the earliest known photographs taken in southeast Florida. On the porch, from left to right are: Roy Chapman, Frank Andrews, and H. D. Pierce (both pictures courtesy of Mrs. Robert Powell).

SAILING AND CAMPING ON THE SOUTHEAST COAST

At last they [Hannibal D. and Charlie Pierce] were off on this long and somewhat dangerous trip [to Biscayne Bay to get a kettle to boil cane syrup], seventy miles to the south along one of the most dangerous parts of the Atlantic coast. Leaving Mrs. Pierce and her little girl at Browns [on Lake Worth], and taking Ros [Brown] with his fishing tackle, gun, and bedding on board, they sailed away to the inlet to wait for a fair wind and a smooth sea for the first run of forty miles to Hillsborough [Hillsboro] inlet, the first harbor to the south of Lake Worth. From Hillsborough on to Biscayne Bay the going was much safer for small craft on account of comparatively shallow water near the land. But from Lake Worth inlet to Hillsborough the Gulf Stream swept in close along the beach and the hundred fathom curve was but a short distance off shore. All south bound boats even to the largest steamships ran in along this coast as close as the depth of water would allow, in order to escape the northward flow of the Gulf Stream, which was so strong that it was well nigh impossible for a small sailboat to make headway against it when tacking.

After waiting a few days the chance came for the run down the coast. When they awoke that morning the wind was fair and the sea smooth. A hurried breakfast of coffee and turtle egg flapjacks, then the tent was taken down, bedding rolled up and everything stored away on board; sail hoisted and with a strong ebb tide they were soon on old ocean sailing to the south on a sea of sparkling blue. There was a gentle breeze from the northeast and the bluff bowed old *Creole* labored along at about five miles an hour through the water but not that fast past the land on account of the head current. The weather was of the finest, and the two boys enjoyed this ocean voyage to the utmost. They arrived off Hillsborough [Hillsboro] late that afternoon. It was thirteen miles from here to New River inlet, and Mr. Pierce, knowing they could not make that inlet before dark, thought it best to spend the night inside Hillsborough. The tide was full and still run-

ning in, so it was easy going inside. They rounded up to shore behind the south point, carried the tent and camp dunnage on land; soon the tent was up and camp fire burning ready to cook supper. To Charlie had fallen the honor of the position of cook; he did not appreciate the honor of his job in the least, as he said, "he was not stuck on it," but as Ros did not know how, and his father wouldn't cook, it was up to him to do it, so he got by with the least work possible. Rice, flapjacks and coffee was what he cooked for their supper that night. If the other two did not like Charlie's cooking they did not dare to "kick" for fear Charlie would strike and the job would fall on them, so they ate their supper without comment.

Supper was finished and mosquitoes bars rigged before dark, then they took time to look around and see what kind of place the Hillsborough inlet was. Mr. Pierce had been here before, but to Ros and Charlie everything was new and rather strange, quite different from Lake Worth or Jupiter inlets. Across the inlet from their camp in the edge of the hammock was a tall coconut tree; then just around a little point farther west were two more, and a few hundred feet up the east shore of the river was another, making four trees in all; their tops loaded with green nuts. Around this first little point the river turned north and ran straight in that direction for about three miles. There a sharp bend cut off their view of the river beyond. Low dense mangroves lined both shores most of the way, broken here and there with low growing bushes of coco plum and seagrape. Across the river to the northwest they could see the mouth of a creek which was about fifty feet wide, and as the tide turned, a heavy flood of dark colored fresh water came pouring out of it. To the south was a long, narrow lagoon leading in that direction for near half a mile; ocean sand beach on the east and low scrub hammock on the west. The inlet itself was only about two hundred feet wide in the widest place and very shallow at low tide.

Ros and Charlie decided to have a look for turtle eggs before it became too dark, so trotted off down the beach to the south. Soon they came upon a fresh nest made only the night before. They were both experts at locating the right spot where the eggs were deposited, and did not waste any time in "digging around," as many do that are not on to the ways of a nesting turtle, but located them on the first dig, and carried fifty eggs back to camp. That may sound like a lot of eggs and so it would be if they had been hen eggs, but when you consider that it takes an even dozen for one batch of pancakes, and only four table-spoons full of flour it will be easier to understand that fifty turtle eggs was not too much after all. For the newcomer

or greenhorn, as they were generally called, it is a very difficult job to locate the eggs, and many times they will fail to find them. A turtle will most always deposit its eggs in the first digging it makes after reaching dry sand of the upper beach; then after carefully covering and packing down the sand over the eggs, it will crawl around and dig all over all creation, just to fool the unwary and uneducated hunter of turtle eggs. As they trudged into camp Charlie said, "Now we will have some good egg cakes for breakfast." They found Mr. Pierce sitting by the campfire fighting mosquitoes and sandflies. The wind had died down and the "bugs" were bad; they lost no time in crawling under their bars and soon all were asleep.

Awake at sunrise the next morn, and not a breath of wind stirring so they took their time in getting breakfast, that is Charlie did, the other two only looked on while Charlie did the cooking. He made a lot of turtle egg cakes and Mr. Pierce and Ros ate them about as fast as he would cook them. Finally they filled up, then Charlie had his turn. After breakfast the two boys carried the dirty dishes to the water's edge and scrubbed them clean with beach sand, then they stood them on edge to drain and dry in the sun. They did not have such a thing as a dish towel or dish rag on board. By using sand and plenty of seawater they managed to get most of the grease off. Hands and face were washed in the same way; soap would not work in saltwater, and they had to keep their small supply of freshwater for drinking and cooking.

The sea breeze came in about nine o'clock fresh from the southeast, almost dead ahead so there was nothing to do but wait for it to change to a more favorable point. When the tide slackened they poled the *Creole* over to the north side and climbed the coconut trees for a supply of the green nuts. The milk or water, as some call it, in the small green nuts was much nicer tasting than the warm stale water in their water cask. Climbing a coconut tree is easy if one knows how, and these two boys knew how equal to any southsea islander; they were barefooted, of course. Charlie was the first to climb. Going up the tree, he grasped it with the flat of his hands around on the opposite side, then placing the soles of his feet on each side of the tree, with knees bent in frog fashion, he literally hopped his way to the top, then crawling up among the long fronds, or leaves, he hooked his arm over one of them, that left both hands free to cut away the nuts and throw them to the ground. They got enough nuts to furnish them with good drinking water for two or three days, then sailed the *Creole* back to camp.

Up to dinner time that day the boys had seen all there was to see around the inlet except the creek over to the north-



west, so they planned to have a look at that when the tide was low in the afternoon. They would have to go down around the south end of the lagoon and walk up along the west shore.

At low tide there was a narrow beach close to the mangroves extending along the west side of this part of the river, but at high tide the water was too deep for wading along this shore. If they only had a rowboat everything would have been quite easy for the exploration of the creek, but of course, they did not have one and would have to do the next best thing, which was wait for low tide. Every few minutes one or the other would exclaim, "Gee, I wish we had a skiff."

They fished for awhile, but that did not last long for in a very short time they had more fish than they could use. They could not go hunting in the pine woods because that same mysterious deep creek came in between them and the pine woods, and no way to cross it. To the north and south was beach ridge covered with a growth of hammock, saw palmetto, and tall grass where rabbits and gophers were about the only kind of game to be found.

Near three o'clock the tide had fallen enough to make a start for the creek possible and they were off to investigate it. The beach or bank in between the mangroves and the water's edge was a slippery kind of muck and they had to "watch their step" to keep from sitting down suddenly in the mud. They reached their destination after awhile, but there was not much they could see when they got there, only a swift torrent of dark fresh water rushing out into the river. About two hundred yards back it made a sudden turn to the south, and of course, they could not see beyond that bend. They wished to stay there and watch the creek for a time, but there was no place where they could sit; the muck bank was wet and slippery. Charlie hunted around the mangrove roots until he found a piece of board that could be used to sit on. Here they remained for more than an hour talking about the creek and wondering what there might be farther on, or up the creek, as they called it. Where did it come from? How long is it, and through what kind of country does it flow? These were the questions they kept asking each other.

While sitting there a flock of white ibis came flying rapidly down around the bend toward them; on sighting the boys they arose abruptly over the mangroves on the north bank and were soon out of sight to the northward. Alligators were there in considerable numbers. There was an eddy on the north side. The gators would drift along lazily, full length on top of the water in this eddy until carried again into the swift current, then they would submerge with only heads



The Brown family of Palm Beach, c. 1890. Mr. and Mrs. David Brown are seated. Standing behind them are Lida P. Brown, D. E. "Ned" Brown, and Mr. and Mrs. Roswell K. "Ros" Brown (photo courtesy of Mrs. Robert Powell).

showing, swim vigorously for the eddy where the same performance would be enacted again.

The boys sat there watching the gators and birds for near two hours, then they noticed the tide was coming up fast and the path along the mangroves getting very narrow. Charlie jumped to his feet saying, "Come on Ros, we had better be making for camp if we want to get there without swimming. See how fast the tide is raising." They made it alright but had to wade in a foot of water in two or three places.

Charlie was cooking turtle egg flapjacks for supper and was practicing turning them by "flipping," as they called it. This was done by tossing them up with a flip of the frypan and catching them on the other side as they fell. Was doing fine and not missing one. Just as he tossed the next cake a hard puff of wind hit it, and away it went, landing on the sand ten feet to leeward. After that he watched the wind when ready to toss a cake.

The next day the wind was still blowing hard from the southeast. They were by this time getting real tired of laying around Hillsborough inlet. After dinner, Mr. Pierce announced his intention of walking down the beach to the Fort Lauderdale Station [House of Refuge] and spending the night with the keeper. He also told Charlie that if the sea was smooth and wind fair in the morning, to pack up and put to sea with the *Creole*, and they could pick him up from the beach when they met him. With these instructions he started off down the

beach. The two boys were interested and not a little excited over the situation they now found themselves in. They were in sole charge of the camp and would be captain and mate of the *Creole* when they got underway far down the coast in the morning if wind and wave should be favorable. They sat by the campfire that night and planned their sailing in the morning if everything was alright. So anxious they were to sail out of the inlet onto the ocean all by themselves they could hardly wait for morning. They were not at all anxious to go to bed, and sat by the campfire until near midnight. Its bright blaze kept their courage up, as they were rather nervous at the thought of being all alone so far from anyone; neither had been in a like situation before, sixteen miles from the nearest white person to the north, and that lone man seven miles from his nearest neighbor to the north. To the south the nearest people were at the Lauderdale House of Refuge, where Mr. Pierce was spending the night, nine miles distant. To the west, nothing but a vast wilderness reaching away to the Gulf of Mexico, without a living human being in all of it excepting perhaps here and there a wandering Seminole Indian hunter. To the east the Atlantic, now looking dark and gloomy in the starlight, reaching away to the coast of Africa. That was isolation for you, and these two fourteen year old boys were well aware of it. At last sleep got the better of their nervousness, and they crawled under their mosquito bar. Their last words before going to sleep were, "Hope the sea is

smooth and the wind fair in the morning."

Charlie thought they had been asleep but an hour or so when he was awakened by Ros calling, "Get up Charlie, it's daylight." Rolling out of bed and jumping to his feet, his first thought was of the sea. Rubbing the sleep from his eyes — he looked and saw it was as smooth as a pond, and the wind was blowing a gentle breeze from the west; an ideal morning for the start. They ran to the water's edge and washed their faces in the briny water, then hurried back to camp. Charlie told Ros to start the fire while he mixed the batter for the cakes. They were all hurry and excitement to start their first voyage alone on the ocean. About an hour after sunrise everything was on board, then they hoisted sails on the *Creole*, got the anchor up and underway with a fair tide out through the inlet; soon they were sailing south on the deep blue water of the Atlantic.

The wind was light and they were making only about three miles an hour. The Great Florida Reef comes to land at Hillsborough inlet; from there north it skirts the shore line; cropping out in large hummocks at Boca Raton, Lake Worth inlet, and Gilberts Bar. From Hillsborough south it runs nearly due south to Fowey Rocks, but the coast line keeps bearing off to the west, which fact causes the reef to lay off shore, less than a quarter of a mile, a mile south of Hillsborough, to about five miles at Cape Florida.

As the boys sailed along over this reef they spent much time in gazing down into the clear depths at the wonders there: sea fans; long streamy sea feathers of brilliant colors, red, yellow, and blue; and fish as wondrous in color as the growth in this garden of the sea. Then about three miles down the coast they spied a tiny black spot at the water's edge away to the south. Charlie calling Ros' attention to this speck said, "I'll bet that is Dad coming to meet us." And in a little while it proved to be Mr. Pierce, as Charlie had predicted. When they came up with him, Charlie sailed the *Creole* close into the beach, and his father crawled on board. The boys were only too glad to have him back on board, and turn over to him the responsibility of navigating the ship. While they had managed the craft alright, there now appeared signs of a change of wind to the south which would be dead ahead and in that case would have been uncertain just what to do if they had been alone. Shortly after Mr. Pierce came on board the wind did change, coming from south-southeast and freshening to a brisk breeze. It was now tack for tack and of course, very slow time was made as the day wore on. By noon the wind was blowing pretty stiff and of course a rough lumpy sea with it. The *Creole* did some tall jumping and low plunging as she labored along close hauled on the wind. "That up and

down motion," said Charlie, "makes me feel sorta bad in my stomach," and Ros did not like it either, said it made him "feel unhappy." They arrived at New River inlet late that afternoon. Sailing inside they kept on up the river to the landing where the keeper of the station kept his boats. This keeper's name was Wash[ington] Jenkins, and was the first keeper appointed to this station in the summer of 1876. How he and his family managed to content themselves in this most isolated and out of the way place it is rather hard to imagine. The *Creole's* crew landed their camp dunnage, set up the tent, and spent the night there. This landing was four miles up river from the inlet. A narrow crooked creek led out to the north from a bend of the river a short distance beyond the landing; this creek was known as Hillsborough Creek [Middle River?]. One could go by way of that creek to Hillsborough in times of high water after a heavy rain, but during dry times it was impassible with any kind of a boat.

Next morning after breakfast they walked over to the beach and up the shore for about a quarter of a mile to the Station known as the House of Refuge No. 4, Fort Lauderdale. There they visited with the keeper and his family for an hour or so, then back to the camp for dinner. They were much interested in a boat Mr. Jenkins was building on the river bank near their camp. It was a good sized sloop, and now nearly ready for the water. He had named her, *Rena Jenkins*, after one of his little girls. The wind meantime had hauled to the east and as the sea was smooth they packed up and set sail for the inlet at three o'clock that afternoon, intending to go on outside and make Biscayne that night if possible.

About half a mile south of Jenkins' landing, New River comes in from the Everglades to the west, a rather narrow but very deep stream, said to be more than sixty feet deep in places. When it reaches the coast it makes a sharp turn to the south, and runs down the coast behind a narrow ridge for a distance of four miles then enters the ocean sideways; that is the east bank ends and the river keeps on down the beach for nearly half a mile, the river water entering the ocean through a number of channels turning out to the east. The tide was running swiftly down the river, and they were soon out on the old ocean once more. There was not much to interest them on this coast south from New River. They were now too far at sea to see the beach distinctly, all they could make out was the strip of yellow sand beach, back of which was the usual high ridge covered with saw palmetto, and back of that, high mangroves growing in the swamps between the ridge and pine woods far to the west.

[On the return voyage] the wind was

blowing a fine sailing breeze from over the starboard quarter, and the bluff bow-ed old boat was carrying "A bone in her teeth." They sailed out into the Gulf Stream to take advantage of its favoring current, where the indigo blue waves, with silvery capped tops, made a picture never to be forgotten. At eleven o'clock they passed the Biscayne House of Refuge No. 5, shortly after they had lunch of cold flapjacks, washed down with cold coffee left over from breakfast. Not a lunch to brag about, however, it partly filled the empty space in their stomachs and satisfied hunger for a time. Near one o'clock they passed New River Inlet, and a little later the Fort Lauderdale House of Refuge No. 4. They arrived off Hillsborough [Hillsboro] late in the afternoon. Then Captain Pierce decided they had better run inside and spend the night; they were pretty sure of good weather for the next day's run to Lake Worth. Besides they expected to stop and pick up Steve Andrews' bale of cotton, and land half of it at Steve's station [Orange Grove House of Refuge] as they passed on their way up the coast, and they would need daylight for that and a smooth sea besides. All these things considered it was thought best to spend the night in Hillsborough, and make a new start early in the morning on the forty mile run from there to Lake Worth inlet. This forty mile run including the two stops would take at least ten hours with an ordinary wind.

They sailed in on a flood tide and tied up to the south bank where they had camped on the down trip. Although more than two weeks had passed since leaving here on their way to Miami, there was no sign of anyone having been there in the interim. Tent was pitched and beds made inside first thing; then Charlie decided they ought to have fish for supper; they had not had any since leaving this place on the way down. He took his shotgun and walked along shore looking for a school of small mullet; he intended to shoot some for bait. He was carrying the gun in the crook of his left arm with the right barrel at full cock when — bang! In some way the gun had jarred off and fired the load. It scared Charlie numb for a second or two, for he knew his gun was pointing in the direction of camp, and for the instant he was afraid to look that way; then he heard Ros call, "Hey! What did you shoot at?" He looked and saw his father and chum moving around the camp, and he now noticed also that his gun muzzle was elevated and carried the charge of the shot high over their heads. This was the first time he had a gun accidentally discharge while in his hands, and the incident so upset him he went straight back to camp and put the gun away. He did not have any appetite for fish that night. The wind went down with the sun, and there was every pros-

pect for a very calm ocean in the morning.

Nothing of any importance happened through the night, and the next morning dawned fair and calm. A light breeze was blowing from off the land, and the ocean smooth as a mill-pond. Breakfast was quickly cooked, turtle egg pancakes this time, for they had found a fresh nest in a short trip on the beach after supper the night before, then everything placed on board, sails hoisted, and they were soon on the ocean again for the last time on this trip, at least they hoped so, and it would be, unless a northeaster came down on them and drove them back before they reached Lake Worth inlet. Such a thing was possible; northeasters were not uncommon in the month of June. There was no sign of a change of weather this morning however, and they fully expected to be in Lake Worth before sundown that day, and in consequence the boys were in high spirits and all had smiles on their faces.

MOVING TO BISCAYNE BAY

It was about this time [1882] that Mr. W. H. Hunt, superintendent of the Houses of Refuge for shipwrecked sailors, was taken seriously ill at his Biscayne Bay home. They hurried him to Key West for medical attention, but he died soon after his arrival there. After Mr. Hunt's death the Life Saving Service appointed a new superintendent then living at Daytona, a man named [Champ H.] Spencer, who started his job as superintendent by firing most of the original keepers and appointing new men to fill their places. E. R. Bradley, the Pierces' nearest neighbor, was appointed keeper of the Fort Lauderdale House and H. D. Pierce keeper of the Biscayne Bay House of Refuge.

Charlie was not overjoyed at the idea of leaving Lake Worth and going to live on Biscayne Bay. Not that he "liked Biscayne less, but that he liked Lake Worth more." Besides he knew only too well that there was not any hunting to be had within miles of the Station, and hunting was the mainstay of his life then.

The moving of the two families from the south end of the lake to Fort Lauderdale and Biscayne Bay was quite an undertaking and one that required a much larger boat than either family had, besides it meant a voyage of 53 miles for the Bradleys and 75 for the Pierces on the sea.

The schooner *Illinois*, Captain [U.D.] Hendrickson, was chartered to do the moving. When the most important of the Pierce family household goods were on board, the house was locked and left to take care of itself, as was the old tom cat, Tim. He was too old for a long sea voyage and was left like Robinson Crusoe [sic]; alone on his island.

The *Illinois* sailed over to the Bradley landing and picked up Mrs. Bradley, the two boys and three little girls, also a portion of their household effects. Mr. Bradley had sailed some days ahead with a load in his sloop, *Nautilus*. The wind had been blowing quite hard for two days from the northeast, and as might be expected, the sea was rolling high. Captain Hendrickson, having perfect faith in his boat, immediately put to sea. It was only a few minutes after the boat crossed the turbulent bar of the inlet that every one of the Bradleys were deathly sea-sick, and not enough basins for all the sick ones at one time. Captain Hendrickson and Mr. Pierce were the only ones on board that did not mind "the deep heaving sea."

The *Illinois* was making splendid time for one of her size, about ten miles an hour. At that rate they would make New River inlet in a little better than five hours if the wind kept up, and there was every indication that it would. New River was their first port of call, as the sailors call it; only there was not a port there. And no people at all living on the river. The House of Refuge was half a mile up the beach from the nearest landing on the river, and that landing was four miles up river from the inlet.

At dinner time no one was hungry, or at least felt like eating, except the Captain. Mr. Pierce took the tiller while he went into the cabin and ate his lunch. The others could not understand how the Captain could eat with all those sick people around him. It did not appear to affect his appetite, however.

About two o'clock that afternoon they were some three or four miles south of the Hillsborough [Hillsboro] River inlet when a heavy rain squall came down on them from the east. The Captain did not think it necessary to shorten sail but kept driving on. The hard gusts of wind forced the old boat on her beams end, and the rain came down in torrents, blotting out everything from view beyond a hundred feet or so around the laboring craft.

Charlie was squatting in the companion way looking out at the storm-swept sea and not a little anxious about what might happen. The seasick passengers were quiet now, scared by the terrible plunging and jumping of the vessel. Suddenly the Captain called to Charlie, asking him to look at the compass and see how she was heading. He said the rain was so thick he could no longer see the land. Charlie reported the boat was heading east-southeast. The wind had hauled more to the northward in the squall, and they were sailing out to sea. Then the Captain slacked sheets and brought the *Illinois* back on her course. As they headed off before the wind, the boat came back to a more even keel and the motion was at once much easier as she ran before the wind and sea.

A few minutes later the squall had passed inland. The sun came out bright and clear, and the wind slackened to a fair sailing breeze, but the sea kept rough and extremely lumpy. When they arrived off New River bar the tide was half up and running in strong. They made quick work in crossing the bar and were soon sailing up the smooth waters of New River, and anchored late that afternoon at the Station landing. The rest of the day was spent in landing the Bradleys and their household goods, and in cleaning up the inside of the cabin. This was not a pleasant task after five seasick kids had been rolling around there for half a day.

They remained there all night, as dark came before all the Bradley goods could be landed. The family of the former keeper, Wash Jenkins, was still there. Mr. Jenkins was very sick and unable to walk and had not made any arrangement for the taking care of his family when they arrived at the Bay, so they remained waiting until Mr. Jenkins could go to the Bay and get a house for them to live in. He asked passage on the *Illinois*, said he was anxious to go to the Bay for medical attention, and he most certainly needed it if a man ever did. He was swelled up as big as a barrel and could hardly breathe. Looked like dropsy, but he made the statement a month or so later when he had greatly improved that he was satisfied he had been poisoned by one that wanted to get him out of the way.

By ten o'clock next morning, had the sick man on board, and they had to carry him to the boat, and were underway down river with a fair tide and wind, making record time. On arriving at the inlet, with wind, sea and tide favorable, they did not pause, but sailed on out to sea. It was still lumpy outside but nothing like so rough, as the day before, and no one became sick.

After an uneventful run of twenty miles, they entered Biscayne Bay, through Norris Cut, the most northern inlet to the Bay, and sailed up to Biscayne, which is the name of the post office where the Gleasons [family of William Gleason, "carpetbag" politician and Dade county pioneer] lived. There they landed Wash Jenkins; Mr. Pierce and the Captain made a cradle with their hands and carried him up to the house. Then sail was hoisted and the *Illinois* underway on the last lap of the voyage across the Bay to the Station landing, located behind some mangrove islands in the mouth of Indian Creek, which is a good sized body of salt water extending four miles to the south between the Bay and ocean.

EVENTFUL JOURNEYS

The sudden move of the Pierce family to Biscayne Bay upset my plans for my usual spring plume hunt with Louie Bradley, my constant companion on all my hunting trips into the Everglades and

swamps of the east coast in quest of the snowy heron, snowy egret, and various other kinds of herons whose backs furnished plumage feathers of commercial value.

[I] had started the building of a large canvas canoe to be used in hunting these plume birds. The canoe was 18 feet long and 40 inches wide and 18 inches deep at bow and stern. Had the frame finished and the canvas painted on the inside ready to put on. My little sloop *Dolly* had been hauled out for near two months on the east side of the island [Hypoluxo Island] undergoing repairs and fitted with a new mainsail. I had been working on her for some time, putting on a new forward deck. She was to be used for the saltwater end of our trip that spring, and was not near finished when the move to Biscayne

were on the way to Brickell's Store for groceries. I hurriedly told Louie of my plans to walk back to Lake Worth to repair my boats and bring them down the coast. On asking him if he would go with me, he answered, "Sure, I'll be ready when you come."

They then went on to Miami and returned to Lauderdale by way of the Everglades. This was Louie and Guy's first sight of the real Everglades. I had never seen them at this time.

It was sometime in the latter part of January, after a few preparations, that I started out one morning from the Biscayne Station on my long walk to Lake Worth, a distance of near sixty miles. A walk from the Bay to Lake Worth was at that time a very different proposition to what it was a few years later. The two

would have been compelled to push my raft along shore for near a mile above the inlet in order to cross without danger of drifting out to sea.

With an old piece of wreckage found lodged in the mangroves and a long bamboo for a pole, I made the crossing all right, landing on the north side about a half mile up stream.

Arrived at the Fort Lauderdale House of Refuge near sundown and, of course, spent the night there. On my way again next morning with Louie Bradley as a traveling companion. As bedding and cooking utensils had been left at the old home on the island, we did not have anything to lug up the beach on this trip. Arrived at Hillsborough inlet about noon. As the tide would not be low before two o'clock, we ate our lunch and had a good rest before crossing the inlet. At low tide we waded the inlet on the outside bar. Water only about knee deep. Reached the Orange Grove Station in ample time for supper. Steve Andrews was a good cook, and we certainly did "store away the grub" that night. Twenty miles of soft sand walking gave us first class appetites that were generally fair under ordinary circumstances. Expect Steve was glad to see us move on next morning.

Steve went with us next morning to take us to the island [Hypoluxo] in his dingy from his place on Spanish Creek (the old Hubel place). We had left an old heavy skiff at the island when we moved, a skiff that Uncle Robert [Moore, brother of Mrs. H. D. Pierce] had made in the winter of 1875. This boat we were going to use on a trip up the lake. Before Steve left us I looked to see if the old boat was still there. It was and was full of water. It had been sunk for over two months and no doubt heavy as an old scow.

As it would take us about two weeks to get my two boats ready for the water, we could not carry up the beach food enough to last us that long. Had heard that Captain H. P. Dye had started a sort of store at his place, so we planned to go up there in our skiff and buy what we needed. We raised the old skiff from her bed on the bottom of the lagoon, and bailed her dry, then started on our twelve mile row up the lake for grub. It was near night when we reached Mr. [Albert] Geer's place. Evie [Everard Geer] saw us and called to us to stop and spend the night, which we did, going on to Captain Dye's the next morning. We bought only what we had to have, mostly flap-jack material, consisting of flour, baking powder, salt, a piece of fat pork to grease the fry pan, coffee, tea, sugar, and canned milk.

Louie was sick all the time on this trip, and I did not understand just what kind of sickness he had. His face was puffed and colorless, and his fingernails were blue. He wanted to sleep all day and night. I let him sleep and did the work on the boats alone. Sure had a lonesome



The Fort Lauderdale House of Refuge (photo courtesy of Mrs. Robert Powell).

Bay was made. There was no time to complete the work on either boat, so had to leave them, intending to return some time later to put them in shape for the trip on the sea to the Bay.

One day in the early part of January [1883] the wind was from the west and the ocean very smooth. Just after lunch I walked out on the front porch of the Station [at Biscayne Bay] and took a look up and down the coast to see if there was anything in sight. Far up the coast saw a small boat. With the spyglass I made it out to be an Indian canoe with three people in it. When near enough I recognized my old friends, Louis and Guy Bradley. A young man with them I did not know, but had seen him at the Lauderdale Station when we landed the Bradleys. They ran on shore for a minute's talk with me and introduced the young man as Johnny Journey. They

inlets, New River and Hillsborough [Hillsboro] had to be crossed in the best way the beach tramp could devise at the time. There was no boat to ferry him over if he was bound north. Coming south, the keeper of the Lauderdale station could be depended on to carry the traveler down the river and set him on the south side. But going north there was no way to let the keeper know he was coming. New River was too wide and deep to wade, and too dangerous, on account of the sharks, to swim. A raft of some sort had to be constructed to cross on. Hillsborough could be crossed at low tide by wading, and one had to only time his arrival to meet the low tide in order to make a safe crossing of that inlet.

On my arrival at New River inlet the tide was running in up river, which was an advantage in crossing on an improvised raft. Had the tide been running out, I

time for more than a week. No one came there. There was no one to talk to but a sleepy sick boy and the old mangy cat.

One afternoon just before dark I heard a loud "hellow" from across the lagoon. On looking over there, saw a man standing on top of the ridge, waving his hat. I jumped in the skiff and rowed over. Found it was George Charter, a young man from Vermont that had homesteaded the beach ridge east of the island. This homestead extended from the foot of the lake to the north end of the lagoon, two miles and a quarter long. He called it his shoestring farm. George had walked up from the bay and was on his way to the settlement up the lake. He brought word from Mr. Bradley to Louie to hurry to Lauderdale as they were all out of food. He wanted Louie to go to Miami for supplies. I could not understand why this sudden shortage of food when we had been gone only a little more than a week, and we were not supposed to return in less than two weeks. George said he was on his way up to the settlement up the lake, but was hungry. He wanted supper with us and a place to spend the night. Told him to jump in the boat. I was glad to have him stay over with us, and we would give him flapjacks and tea for supper. Louie shook off some of his sleepiness and appeared to feel better when he got the word we would have to stir our stumps and get to the Lauderdale Station soon as we could.

We ate a hasty and a light breakfast of flapjacks and coffee next morning; then locked up the house and departed, leaving the boat tied to a stake at the lake end of our beach trail. George going north up the beach, we said goodbye and started off down the beach to the south, thirty miles ahead of us before supper time. We stopped at the Orange Grove Station only long enough to tell Steve why we were going back and to get a drink. It would be ten miles before we had another chance for a drink of water at Boca Raton. Then we were off again at a rapid pace down the beach to the south. There was not time to waste if we made Lauderdale Station by dark, and that was what we started out to do.

It was a fine day for our trip. A fresh wind was blowing from the east and the seas came rolling in three lines deep; their snowy crests gleaming in the bright sunshine. With shoes tied together with their laces and slung over our shoulders, our trousers rolled up to our knees, we made good time down the beach at the water's edge. For there the wet sand was the hardest, and was the best walking. The regular beach walker always went barefooted. It was easier and faster that way.

We arrived at Boca Raton (Spanish, meaning mouth of rat) about twelve thirty and stopped to eat our lunch of

cold flapjacks left over from breakfast. Another reason for eating our lunch here was Boca Raton Lake was fresh water, and came close to the beach near the south end of the lake, where at some distant time there was an inlet or outlet to the sea. Legends say that when the inlet was open in pirate times they used it for a harbor. But there has never been any indication around the lake that such was the case.

Only about ten minutes was required to eat our meager lunch of cold flapjacks, washed down with a drink from the lake, then we were off again down the beach. Arriving at Hillsborough Inlet late in the afternoon, as we had calculated, the tide was low enough for us to wade across the inlet on the outer bar, keeping a sharp lookout for sharks meantime. There were plenty of them coasting along on the outside of the breakers.

It was just sundown as we stepped upon the porch of the Lauderdale Station, very tired and hungry. Louie's folks were glad to see us so soon after sending us word of their plight. Only yesterday morning they had sent their call for help and here we were in answer to that call. Supper was ready and waiting for us. Grits and palmetto cabbage was all they had, but there was plenty of it such as it was. Not much in it however to build up our strength after that long tramp on short rations. We might have packed some of the food we had at the island, and brought it with us. It would have been a big help under the circumstances. But we started in such a hurry it never occurred to us that it would be the proper thing to do. We thought of the good flour that we had left behind as we ate our supper of cabbage and grits.

After supper that night, as we sat in the living room talking over the situation, I asked Mr. [E. R.] Bradley what kind of boat he had for us to make the trip through the Everglades to Biscayne Bay. For we would be compelled to go that way. The ocean was entirely too rough to be considered then, and there was no time to waste in waiting for a smooth sea. Food had to be got as soon as possible. He said there was an old Indian canoe that had washed on shore about a mile up the beach, and we could get that for our trip through the Everglades. There was a deep slough just back of the beach ridge extending for near two miles north and south, passing close behind the Station and ending some two or three hundred yards south of it. Mr. Bradley's plan was to haul this old canoe over the beach ridge to the slough; then pole her to the south end and again haul it over a long way to the river.

"That sounds like a big job to me," I said when he had stated his plan. "Yes," he said, "it will take the best part of tomorrow to get that canoe down to the Station, and the next morning we can haul her to the river from the slough.

That will not take very long as I have rollers and plank to haul her on when we get it that far."

After a breakfast of "swamp cabbage," as some call it, and grits, we started up the beach to get that canoe. And what a canoe it was. Some white man had tried to improve on the Indian model by sawing it open lengthwise and inserting a 3x9 plank to make it wider. The bow and stern had been filled in with a solid block of wood. It was about as heavy as two ordinary cypress canoes, a cumbersome and unwieldy craft. I did not like the look of it at all, but it would have to do as it was all we had in which to make the forced voyage to the bay for food that was so badly needed. We gathered up a number of pieces of boards scattered along the shore. These were laid along ahead of the canoe, then it was dragged along over them. We could move it only a few inches at a time. And those few inches were made in the same way the Irishman played the fiddle, "By main strength by jabbars."

It was near two o'clock that afternoon when the old canoe floated in the water of the slough. We piled in and with improvised poles pushed her towards the Station slowly. The pieces of boards were a rather poor substitute for oars or a good pole, and the slough was full of lily pads and sawgrass. The canoe had to be forced through them by slow and hard pushing.

When about half way to the Station I happened to look to the southeast and there within sixty yards of us stood two fine deer at the edge of the hammock, calmly looking at us. When I exclaimed, "Look at the deer!" the others stopped pushing and turned to look in the direction indicated. The deer, seeing that they were observed, turned about and with two jumps were out of sight in the hammock. Then we commenced to berate each other for not thinking to bring a gun, but that did not help the matter. We could not help cussing ourselves mentally however for our carelessness as we thought of what fine eating we might have had if we only had thought to bring a gun on this trip. We paid for our thoughtlessness that time by having to eat palmetto cabbage and grits for supper, when we might have had a good venison steak.

It was late in the afternoon when we arrived at the Station, and after a meager dinner spent the balance of the day resting after such a strenuous morning. Next day after breakfast of the same grits and cabbage, we hauled the canoe over into New River. We had just as far to haul it as the day before, but now we had rollers and made quick work of it. At eleven o'clock we were ready to start up river for the Everglades. Mrs. Bradley used the last bit of flour she had in the house to bake a very small loaf of bread for us to take along that we might be sure



Seminole Indians were the only inhabitants of the Everglades when Charles Pierce and the Bradleys explored there in 1883 (photo courtesy of Mrs. Robert Powell).

of a little something to eat. We had the gun now and hoped to kill something to help out our too small stock of food. But what a supply of grub for three hungry young fellows — Guy was going with us — that would have to last at least two days. We could not make it through the Glades to the Bay in less time and we intended to keep moving all night if possible. I could have eaten three loaves the size of this one Mrs. Bradley had baked for the trip and then have been hungry. We had some fishing lines and a little dry tea but not another thing. Not even salt that would have been useful in case we killed something or caught fish.

There was no time to waste; we started at once. Although it was now near noon we did not intend to eat any of our little loaf of bread until night wherever we might be at that time. We hoped to be able to kill some kind of game before then, so with hopeful hearts we pushed off. The river was too deep to use poles. We had to row the old ark against a strong current that was flowing down from the Everglades to the sea and our progress was very slow.

This was my first sight of the upper river. It was crooked; kept turning first north, then south, and at no time could we see any distance ahead on account of the bends in the channel. A short way up the river, and before we reached the pine timber, we passed a large dense hammock on the north bank. This hammock was known as the "Coulee hammock," noted for the massacre of the Coulee family here by the Seminoles about 1837 [actually the Cooley massacre of January 6, 1836]. Soon after passing this hammock we came to where the river

made its way through thick high pine woods. The banks were now some higher and in most places of overhanging rock.

All the land hereabouts is solid rock, and it became evident to me as I looked at it that at some remote time there had been an earthquake that had opened up this fissure from the Glades to the coast making the channel now called New River. There is a legend of the Seminoles that tells how it happened in one night, hence the name, New River.

As we kept pulling steadily onward up the river we had little to say. Our minds on the subject of food, when one did speak it was on the chances of killing something good to eat, or at least fit to eat. But luck seemed against us now. No birds fit to eat came within range of our old twelve gauge muzzleloader shotgun. Alligators were to be seen most any place one might look and tame enough too, letting us approach within easy gunshot, but we were not yet hungry enough to try gator steak. I had tried it once, years before, and did not care to repeat the experiment.

Late in the afternoon we had passed beyond the high pine land and came to where the river banks were lined with a thick growth of cypress timber. The trees were growing crowded close together, gaunt and gray with bare limbs draped in long festoons of gray Spanish moss swaying back and forth in the afternoon wind. It drops its needles or foliage in the early fall and stands bare and gray like a dead tree until spring. These tall bare trees standing there in the silence of the wilderness with their waving drapery of gray moss had a ghostly appearance, while underneath them in the shallow

water at their roots were growing dense masses of blue and white spearheadlilies. A little later we spied a fishhawk's nest in the top of a tall cypress on the north bank of the river. Mrs. Fishhawk was at home on the nest, and I felt certain that there were eggs in the nest that I could sell for a dollar each if there was a chance to obtain them. But time was a more important item right then so we said "goodbye" to the lady, promising to call on our return.

Just at sundown we arrived at the end of navigation in the river. Here the water was pouring from the Everglades in a narrow channel through rock into the river. Coming in from the south over a rock bottom it was a small rapids for as much as a hundred feet or so, and so swift it taxed our strength to the utmost to push the old canoe up against it. When we reached still water of the Glades, we paused for the first bite to eat since our breakfast of grits and palmetto cabbage. The extra exertion of pushing up against the rapids had sharpened the appetite of Louie and I to a painful point. We were ravenous and could have eaten boiled owl had there been any, but alas all we had was the very small loaf of bread. Guy had not helped us at all. He was sick and lay in the bow of the canoe sleeping all the time until we stopped. Then he roused up and was ready for his share of the supper. I divided the little loaf into three equal parts after carefully making a correct measure to be sure all had the same amount. Just why Guy had to come with us on that rather perilous trip I never did understand. He was not of the least use, was in fact a hindrance and a liability.

We sat there in the gathering gloom of night munching our bread and making it last as long as possible. Then we drank all the water we could hold to fill up the empty space. Had we been smokers it would have helped a lot to have smoked a pipe after this hearty supper. But none of us used tobacco in any shape at that time. After taking another big drink of Glade water, we wearily picked up the oars and started on out into the great Everglades by moonlight. As we came into the Glades just before dark we noticed a large Indian village on the land a mile or so to the southeast. Now we could see a number of campfires burning in the village and hear dogs barking.

As night settled down on this great morass its wild life seemed to wake up and the night concert commenced. I had never heard anything like it. The first new thing I noticed in particular was the crying of the limpkin, or crying bird. Of course I had seen, killed, and ate limpkin, but never had I heard anything like this. There seemed to be hundreds of them all around us and more distant until their crying calls were lost in the far distance of the great swamp. Then there was an incessant croaking of thousands of

big bull frogs. Their deep bass, "Cronk-cronk," was on every hand mingling with the shrill tones of the smaller frogs in such countless numbers the noise they made sounded far away, not unlike the rumble of a heavy train. To this night's music was added the mellow "quark-quark" of night herons as they passed on their way to some distant feeding ground. There were other sounds too numerous to mention, coming from birds and reptiles that I could not name.

"Louie," said I, "Did you ever in your life hear anything like this before?" "I certainly never have," he answered. "It was daylight all the way when I came through here with Johnny Journey from Miami that trip, and I had no idea it was like this at night. It sounds as if everything alive out here is trying to lift up its voice and take a part in the concert."

All this time the limpkins (*Aramus pictus*) kept up their incessant crying, "Ka-ee, ka-ee." They were all around us, and we would have liked very much to kill one or two. Then we should have had something fine to eat. For the limpkin does not eat fish. It feeds mostly on a snail found only in the fresh water swamps, and its flesh tastes much like that of the domestic duck. But they kept well away from us. At least far enough that we could not discern them in the pale moonlight.

The light of a full moon was a great help in finding our way among the maze of islands of all sizes and kinds. Some of them mere patches of sawgrass while others were of considerable size, covered with a heavy growth of bushes and trees. Sometimes the moonlight caused us to get stuck in the mud. We would see what looked like a clear channel ahead, only to find ourselves a few minutes later firmly stuck in the mudbank. An inch or two of water looked the same as two or three feet in the moonlight.

Louie would push the canoe along for about half an hour, giving me a chance to rest for a few minutes. Then I would take the pole and Louie would rest. And so we kept moving slowly but steadily south in the direction of Biscayne Bay. One time while resting, about ten o'clock, I happened to look astern and there were the Indian campfires on the main-land. They should have been abeam, but there they were dead-astern.

"Hey Louie! Where are you going?" I called out when I noticed the direction of the fires.

"Why I am pushing her south, what makes you ask that curious question?" said he. "Look at those fires, they should be on our beam, but now they are dead astern," was my answer, "you are pushing due west for the Big Cypress on the west coast or some other place out there we don't want to go."

"Doggone, you are right, I got turned around and never noticed it. Guess I

had better head her in the right direction if we expect to reach the Bay before we starve." With these remarks he turned the canoe's bow to the south once more.

There were two conditions in our favor, there was not a breath of wind, nor a cloud to be seen. The great inland sea of shallow water, grass, and islands was bathed in the pale mellow light of a full moon. But in spite of the moon's bright light, we were going blind so to speak, as we did not know if we were within a mile or more of the right channel, the channel where we should be. We had to trust to luck until daylight, and kept moving south or nearly so.

It was near midnight. I had relieved Louie but a few minutes when we came near a small hammock island; the water appeared to be open and fairly deep along side of it, so I poled the canoe close up to the side of the island. Just then I happened to look up at the top of the trees, and there, sound asleep on the end of a dead limb, was a water turkey. I slowly and carefully laid the pole down and whispered to Louie to hand me the gun. This he did with a look of wonder on his face. He had not seen the bird. I took the best aim I could in the faint light and pulled the trigger.

The explosion of that old gun made a terrific noise in the still night air of the Everglades. Instantly all sounds of the grand concert of the big swamp were hushed in our vicinity. The bird fell into the water near the canoe, stone dead. I picked it up and tossed it to Louie. Guy had been sound asleep in the bow and was, of course, awakened by the noise of the gun. He wanted to know what all the noise and fuss was about. I said, "Here boys is something to eat. It is not the choicest of meat, but it will help to keep us going. I propose to stop right here and cook and eat it, that is, my share of it. Louie, you dress the bird and I will crawl into this island and see if there is any dry spot large enough on which to build a fire." Pushing the bow of the canoe into the bushes, I picked up the axe, and crawling over Guy, made my way into the island through a terrible tangle of briars, sawgrass, and bushes. Not a very nice job making my way into that jungle at midnight. The hammock was so dense it excluded every bit of moonlight. I could not see where I was stepping, made my way by feeling, trusting to luck that I did not step on a cottonmouth moccasin. Near the center of the island I found a small piece of dry land, just about large enough for our cook fire. [I] cleared a place for the fire, then gathered some dry grass and twigs and set them on fire to give me light that I might finish the cooking of the turkey. I then cut two forked sticks, pushed them in the ground each side of the fire, then a cross stick to swing the kettle on. Went back to the canoe; found Louie had the turkey ready for the pot.

It was cut up into small pieces so it would cook quick, then put in the kettle which was half full of water, no salt and pepper. When hung over the fire Louie and I stood on either side, breaking off the small dead branches from the surrounding bushes to keep the fire going strong. This kept both of us busy until the bird was done.

Water turkey sounds big to those who do not know the bird. Water turkey (*Platys Anhinga*) resembles a real turkey just about as much as a humming bird resembles an eagle. They are strictly a water bird and eat live fish only, and because of the fish diet their flesh has a strong fish odor and flavor. This bird is also known as the darter or snake bird, called snake bird from the appearance of its head and neck while swimming with its body submerged. It seldom swims on the surface and never when pursued. In such case when it wishes to see where its pursuer is, it sticks its snake-like head and neck a few inches above the water, then drops it under water and is gone without making a ripple.

When our turkey was cooked we took it on board of the canoe and divided it in three equal parts. Also the water it was cooked in. This we called soup. We did not have to wake Guy when the midnight supper was ready. The mosquitoes would not let him sleep while laying still near the bushes. We were so hungry we eagerly ate our portions of the bird and drank the "soup," tho' it did not have a speck of salt, pepper, or seasoning of any kind. The only drawback we could see was there was not half enough of it.

After our midnight lunch, Guy curled up in the bow again and went to sleep while Louie and I pushed the canoe along in what we thought was a southerly direction. About four o'clock in the morning we decided to rest until daylight. In the first place [we] were very tired and sleepy; for the second we were not sure just where we were. Some place in the Everglades to be sure, but that took in a large piece of country if the Glades could be called country.

We managed to sleep a little before the sun rose. The mosquitoes were bothersome and we did not have a real sleep, just cat naps between bites. For some reason never explained, the mosquitoes of the Everglades are most persistent at daybreak. In this case they tormented me until wide awake and I saw it was broad day. Standing up, I looked on all sides. Small islands, water, and sawgrass far as I could see south, west, and north. Far to the east was a dark line of heavy pine woods. While I was gazing over the vast expanse of the Glades, the mosquitoes roused Louie from a troubled sleep. I called to him to stand up and tell me if he could see anything he knew that would give us our location.

"There," he said, pointing to a deep bay in the pine timber far to the east and

south, "that is Snake Creek Bight, and at the far end of it is the entrance to Snake Creek. We are just about six miles too far to the west."

It was a beautiful morning, not a cloud to be seen, and a gentle breeze came with the sun from the east. All kinds of aquatic birds could be seen on every hand, but they kept a safe distance from us. We did not have an opportunity to shoot any of them for our breakfast, and of course were compelled to go without that much-needed meal. Nothing to be gained by sitting there longer, so we picked up the poles and headed for Snake Creek bight. When we arrived at the head waters of Snake Creek, we still had about fifteen miles to travel before reaching Biscayne Station and something to eat.

When within a half a mile or so of the creek we accidentally took the wrong channel. When we came to the end of it and seeing our mistake, to save going back for some distance, I jumped overboard and dragged the canoe through a bad mess of mud and grass into the right channel. This extra exertion made me almost crazy for food. I went to the grub box looking for food, knowing full well there was nothing there in the shape of food, but I felt that I just had to have something. I saw the tea can and took it up and swallowed about a tablespoonful of dry tea then a big drink of water and started poling on. In about ten minutes that tea made me so sick I did not want anything to eat. "Gee!" but I was sick for near half an hour. We did not stop however, and after a time the nausea caused by eating dry tea passed off.

About eleven o'clock we entered the creek. Although suffering with a ravenous hunger, we were greatly elated on entering this swift running stream and at once commenced to look for a likely place to fish. On rounding a bend a few minutes later we found just the spot we looked for. A bunch of lily pads on the edge of a deep pool. Rounding in there, we made fast and began to hunt worms in the bonnets of the lilies. Baiting the pin hooks with the worms we soon had a supply of small bream. Using these on larger tackle we fished for black bass and soon had two fine large bass, more than enough to make us a good meal. With great eagerness at the prospect of a full meal we landed; Louie collected dry wood and started a fire while I cleaned the fish. We did not have any salt or grease to fry them in. There were only two ways of cooking them at our command: roast them on the coals or boil them. We decided to boil them as the quickest way to have them ready for eating.

But when the fish was ready I found that I could eat but very little of it. It seemed to turn against me. At first I thought it was the effect of my tea sickness, until I noticed that Louie and Guy were in the same fix. They too

could eat but little of the fish. Suppose it was because we had been without food so long our stomachs were too weak to stand fish without salt. It had one good effect however; we were no longer hungry and what little we ate gave us more energy. We resumed our journey down Snake Creek.

Passed a number of Indian camps, where we saw the men at work clearing land on which to plant their gardens of corn, sweet potatoes and pumpkins.

It was after dark — yes some time after dark — when we passed out of Snake Creek into Biscayne Bay. We now had four miles to go against a head tide and a fresh east wind that made our progress slow and hard. At nine o'clock that night we arrived at the Biscayne Station landing. Here we saw H. F. Hammon's [a Palm Beach pioneer who founded Hammondville, west of Pompano in the 1900s] sharpie *Ina*, at anchor. This boat had been built but a short time before by Hammon and Lainheart [William N. Lanehart] at their home on Lake Worth. She was rigged as a sharpie but had gaff sails in place of the usual leg-o-mutton of the New Haven Sharpie. She was something over ten tons register and a well built craft. I wondered when I saw her, "what she was doing here."

We made fast to the dock and crawled out on shore. Yes, literally crawled, and when we started to walk up the trail staggered like old drunks. We were so weak from lack of food for so long a time, it was all we could do to reach the station without stopping to rest on the way. When my mother saw us as we walked into the living room of the Station she exclaimed, "For goodness sake! What is the matter with you boys? You look as if you had been drawn through a knot hole."

"We are about starved. Have you anything cooked in the safe?" was my reply. "We have not had food enough to eat for the past three days and have poled and poled a heavy old canoe through the Glades from New River on empty stomachs."

Well, it so happened that mother had plenty of cooked food which only needed a little warming and we were soon hard at work trying to fill that vacuum in our insides. When we were so full we could hold no more we stopped eating and as all three agreed, were still hungry.

We now found out why the *Ina* was here. Hammon and Lainheart [sic] had been awarded the contract to repair all the Houses of Refuge on the Florida coast, by the [federal] Government, and had started with the Biscayne Bay House first. I asked where the men were and was told they had gone to bed upstairs.

Speaking of beds also reminded me that we also stood in need of sleep, not having any worthy the name for nearly 40 hours. Calling to Louie and Guy to come along I went up stairs where I saw

a number of men asleep on the Government cots. All the set up cots were occupied so we had to set up three for our use. While working on a cot a man near woke up and asked, "What's up?" "Nothing," I answered, "But this cot will be pretty soon."

Next morning we had to be called a number of times before we could wake enough to know some one was calling us to breakfast. When I realized the call meant something to eat, I was out of bed in a hurry and pulling the other boys until they were wide awake. When I told them there was something good to eat waiting for us downstairs, they needed no further urging and got out in a hurry: we were still hungry.

After breakfast Louie and Guy departed for Brickell's Store at Miami where they would purchase supplies for their folks at Fort Lauderdale. This part of their trip would be easy as they had the use of our sloop, *Creole*. Meantime I laid around and rested. I also made the acquaintance of the men employed on the repair work. One of them, Frank Boye, was from Indian River, and was recognized up there as a fine violinist. But for some reason known only to himself, we could not induce him to play anything on my violin. Perhaps the violin was not good enough to suit his musical ear. Anyway he would not play on it. I had not at this time made much progress as a violinist and was anxious to hear some one play it that could make music on the instrument.

Louie and Guy did not return from Miami until after dark. So we prepared for another good night's sleep and an early start on the return trip in the morning. We did not anticipate anything but a pleasant and quick trip back to Lauderdale, as we would have the boat loaded with good things to eat, and now were satisfied we knew the way back, so there would be no delay in hunting channels in the Everglades.

After breakfast the next morning we said goodbye to the folks at the Station and were on our way. We did not make very good time going up Snake Creek. The current was rather swift and in consequence our progress slow. When dark overtook us we were yet some distance from the Glades.

We found a good camping place on the north bank of the creek, just as the sun went down. It was an old Indian camp ground ready made for our use. It was a romantic spot, under large water oaks, the ground was as clean as a floor, high and dry. All we had to do was spread out the blankets on the ground, build a fire and cook supper. This we quickly did. We had canned roast beef, soda crackers, butter, Cocoa with sugar and milk. We certainly enjoyed this camp. Fine weather, plenty to eat, no mosquitoes, a good dry camp. What more could one ask. But what a difference from the trip south

only two days ago. That experience certainly made us appreciate what we had.

We slept late the next morning. In fact the sun was well above the tree tops when I opened my eyes and decided it was time to be doing something about getting our breakfast and starting on our way once more. While we had plenty of food and [were] enjoying the trip the folks at Lauderdale were still living on palmetto cabbage and grits. And perhaps the grits might have given out by this time, leaving them with only palmetto cabbage to keep the spark of life in their bodies. So it was necessary that we hurry on with our supplies.

"Hey boys!" I yelled. "Git up. The sun is away up and here you are sleeping the good daylight away like you have nothing else to do."

Louie stuck his head out from under the blanket, blinking at me he drawled, "Do you think it is time to get up?"

"Stand up and see for yourself," I answered, "We have a long journey ahead of us and we had better be doing about." With this reply I went to the creek and washed, then built a fire and started breakfast. In an hour's time we were again on our way up the creek.

The current was strong against us. We had to lay back on those oars with all our strength to make any kind of time against it. And it was noon or a little past when we passed from the creek into the Everglades.

"Louie," said I, "Do you know where the channel is that leads north out of this, I mean the one that takes us straight through to New River?"

"Well," he answered, "I think I know where it is, but am not sure. We will just have to keep a sharp lookout for it as we go along. It is small and we might pass it if we are not careful."

We now stopped to eat a can of cold canned beef and crackers, then pushed on looking for a little channel leading north. But as hour after hour passed we kept on without finding the little channel through the sawgrass. The way was open and clear to the northeast and we followed it.

It was near sundown when we decided we had passed the long looked for passage to the north and had gone many miles out of our way to the northwest. We stopped and ate our supper and as we ate talked the situation over. Then we determined to turn back and force our way through the sawgrass to the open water to the north at the first likely place we came to. When we came to this decision darkness was upon us, so we waited for the moon to rise. This channel, the one we had been following all the afternoon, was wide and quite deep. When we stopped at sundown we could not see the end of it. It faded out in the distance to the northwest. Have since heard that this channel went clear across the Everglades to the Big Cypress Swamp on the west coast.

The moon rose about eight o'clock and half an hour later gave us enough light to see our way on the back track. Between eleven and twelve o'clock we found an opening in the sawgrass that looked as if it might take us through to the open water to the north. In we went, but it was terrible hard work pushing the loaded canoe through the tangle of moss grass and water weeds. Most likely if it had been daylight we never would have attempted to push through such a place, but the moonlight was deceptive and the passage looked better than it actually was as we soon found out, but we kept on pushing as hard as we could, moving only a few inches at the time. It was the hardest of work and for more than

an hour we kept at it. At last we slid out into the open water to the north. Now there was a clear open route through to New River. There was no land in sight, not even any small islands near enough to be seen in the pale moonlight, so there was no chance for a camp.

We were now very tired and sleepy. It was after one o'clock so I proposed that we try and get some sleep there in the canoe. Guy had curled up on his old place on the bow and had been sleeping while Louie and I worked getting the canoe through the sawgrass. The canoe leaked just enough to keep about half an inch of water on the bottom, so we could not use that for a bed. I took the stern and Louie fixed himself after a fashion on the middle seat. Yes, there were some mosquitoes, not many but just enough to keep us from going to sleep at once. I would be just passing out into the land of Nod when along would come a big fellow with a lazy boo-o-o-o that would wake me up slapping wildly. Then I would try it over again. At last I wrapped the blanket around my head, leaving only a small hole to breathe through. Then I went to sleep.

We did not need an alarm clock to wake us early next morning. In fact our sleeping the balance of the night was in cat-naps only. The cramped positions and the ever present mosquitoes prevented any long or deep sleep. And again the chill at daybreak got us up and moving. Have always found it the case, the coldest part of an Everglade night is at daybreak. Why I do not know but it is so. After standing up and stretching our cramped and weary limbs, washed the sleep from our eyes over the side of the canoe, then ate our breakfast of canned beef and crackers. We would have enjoyed a cup of hot drink of most any kind that morning. [We] had not had any warm food or drink since the morning before.

After breakfast, followed by a drink of pure Glade water, we were again on our way. Open water now, and we made fairly good time towards New River. Arrived at the small swift water channel that runs into New River at noon. Here we stopped for lunch of beef and crackers as usual. We were in good spirits now for we knew there was a strong fair current in our favor nearly all the way to the House of Refuge at Lauderdale. And we would not be long in reaching our journey's end in this old ark of a canoe.

While tied to an overhanging bush eating our lunch, an Everglades Kite passed us flying slowly, as they always do, towards the open Glades. We watched it with great interest until it passed out of sight behind the tall cypress to the west. These curious hawks were new to us then, never having seen one before this trip in the Glades.

The Everglades Kite (*Rosthamus Sociabilis Plumous*) or snail hawk, was first



Exploring the southeast Florida wilderness by boat, as sketched by George W. Potter (illustration courtesy of Marjorie P. Stewart).

discovered in the Everglades near the head of the Miami River, hence its name. It is found in Florida, only in the Glades and adjacent swamps, and lives entirely on a snail that is found only in those places, and I have often wondered, how did the first pair of these hawks arrive in the Glades? Some would answer that question by saying, "Why they were created at the same time that God created every living thing on the face of the earth." We are also told that after the creation everything was brought before Adam in the Garden of Eden to be named. And this Garden of Eden was located some place in Europe or the eastern continent. Well, had the Everglades Kite been created there it would be found in the swamps of that country and not in the Everglades of Florida. For it is not a strong flier and never could have crossed the three thousand miles or more of sea to make its home in Florida. Well, all there is to it, it is now living in the Everglades. And the snail it feeds on seems to have been created especially for its use, for no other bird except the Limpkin eats it. This snail, found only in the Glades and bordering swamps, lives in a curled shell of dirty brown on the upper part, underneath it is a bright lavender. When full grown it is about an inch and a half in diameter. When looking for food the snail hawk comes flying slowly over the swamp, a few feet above the tops of the tall sawgrass, its head down looking for snails. When it sees one, it hovers an instant, then drops straight down and grabs the snail in one of its strong talons. Then rises and makes its way slowly to the nearest bush or small tree and proceeds to pull the snail out of its shell, and swallows it whole in the same manner that a heron does a fish. The next year I found a nest of Everglade Kites in a swamp west of Lake Worth. The nest contained two eggs mottled with brown spots and under the nest on a little patch of ground, or miniature island the bush was growing on, was a little pile of snail shells, empty shells.

As the Everglade Kite passed out of our sight, I thought of the fishhawk's nest we had seen on our way up river. "Louie," said I, "we have plenty of time this afternoon, I want to stop at that fishhawk's nest we saw on our way up and see if there are any eggs. I can get \$1 each for them if there are any. Mr. Robert Sharpless of Altoona, Penna., the man I have been collecting eggs for in the past year has offered that for eggs of the fishhawk (Osprey)."

"Suppose the old lady objects to you taking her eggs," said Louie. "Well," was my reply, "I expect you to stand by with that shotgun ready, and if she comes too close and shows fight, to shoot her." We then cast off and resumed our journey. In about a half an hour we arrived at the fishhawk's nest, or rather at the foot of the tree in which the nest was

located. We made the boat fast to the tree and I prepared to go aloft. Louie meantime picking up the shotgun to be ready in case the hawk attacked me.

The trunk of the cypress was covered with a heavy drapery of Spanish moss. A number of dead branches and knots stuck out through the moss, furnishing numerous footholds. I went rapidly up to the nest. The fishhawk was meantime circling around overhead uttering loud cries. Was right near the nest when I heard a rushing sound above. I looked up and saw the old bird making a dive right for me with both feet hanging down, talons spread ready to grab. I yelled, "Hey Louie," and let go and came shooting down that tree about fifty times faster than I went up, bringing most of the tree's moss covering with me. It was a good thing for me that the moss was thick on the tree, as it kept me from getting badly scratched and bruised on the dead limbs and knots in my sudden drop to the ground.

"Why the dickens didn't you shoot the old cuss when she made for me?" was the question I asked as soon as I got my breath. Louie was laughing so much that he could not answer at once. Then he told me that he did not see the bird coming down until she was too close to me for him to shoot without danger of hitting me.

"But it was a sight to see," he exclaimed, "the way you came down that tree bringing all the moss with you."

After exacting a promise from Louie to shoot the bird as soon as she came within range and not wait until she made a dive at me, I started to climb the tree again, keeping my eye on that old fighting hawk meantime.

When the fishhawk saw me going back to her nest, she came back flying well up in the air overhead. Louie did not wait for her to make a dive this time, but let drive at her at long range. He hit her but not bad, just enough to take all the scrap out of her. She lit on a tree about two hundred yards east of us and remained there while I climbed to the nest and got the two eggs that were in it. I put the eggs inside my shirt as I had to use both hands in coming down. I got them safely to the canoe and placed them in the mess chest. Then we cast off and continued on our way down the river.

When we turned from New River into Middle River or Snook creek, as it was called, we met a hard head tide but as we had only about a mile to go we made it in good time. When we reached the landing we found Mr. Bradley there waiting for us. He wanted to know at once what had been keeping us so long, and added the information that they were just about starved. Their supply of grits had given out and for the last two days [they] had been living on Palmetto cabbage alone.

Without delay we unloaded the canoe. Each taking a load we started for the station. Mrs. Bradley and the little girls met us with broad smiles. They were certainly glad to see us coming, bringing in the food. Mrs. Bradley started at once to cook supper although it was early in the afternoon. No one there wanted to wait until dark for supper. We were all hungry so why not eat at once. We did.

Next morning Louie and I started walking up the beach for Hypoluxo, to complete our job of fixing up my boats and taking them to the Bay.

We took it easy as it was only nine miles to the Hillsborough, and the tide would not be low until afternoon. We had to wade the inlet, and this could be done only at low tide. At any other time it was a swimming job. We timed our arrival at the inlet just right, and were soon on the north side and making tracks for the Orange Grove Station, or "Steve's" as we called it [after Steve Andrews, the keeper], where we arrived in time for supper.

RETURN TO BISCAYNE BAY AND BACK

It was late in the afternoon, and we [Charles Pierce and Louis Bradley] were still some distance from the Hillsborough [Hillsboro] River [after having repaired the canvas canoe at Hypoluxo and now towing it back to Biscayne Bay with the sloop *Dolly*] when the ground swells commenced to increase in size and number. I now told Louie we would have to run into Hillsborough and spend the night there. If we kept on, it would be late in the night when we arrived at the Lauderdale Station, and with the increasing sea it would be dangerous for us to attempt a landing there. Besides we wanted water badly and most likely could find some at Hillsborough. The tide would be on the flood when we arrived at the inlet but the wind was ahead and we would have trouble in beating in over the bar in the big sea then running.

The *Dolly* was an open boat and we had tools enough in our load to send her to the bottom if she filled with a big breaking sea. When we came to the inlet the sun was nearly down and the big rollers were breaking heavy on the reef in front of the inlet. I sailed on by, looking at it and trying to figure the best way to get inside without swamping in the breaker on the bar.

At last I had a plan. I did not say a word to Louie but came about and sailed back to the inlet just outside the line of breakers. When in front of the inlet [I] headed the *Dolly* in behind three big combers [waves], keeping her sail rap full. Then I looked behind and saw a big hollow comber mounting into the air about fifty feet away and coming at us with the speed of an express train. I made an exclamation that caused Louie to look back.

"We'll swamp, we'll swamp," he yelled, then turned his back on the on-rushing wave and waited for his prediction to be fulfilled. We did not swamp however, tho' we came very near it. I expected to see the canoe that was towing on the end of a long line, go rolling like a log when the breaker hit her. She turned partly broadside to the sea as it crashed down on her, and it hit her under the bilge with such force the light boat was thrown high in the air clear of the comber. It passed under her, then she fell into smooth water behind the sea and never shipped a drop. Fortunately for us, the breaker had expended its greatest force and was greatly diminished before it reached the *Dolly*. It struck hard enough, however, to throw her on her beam-ends and fill her half full of water.

Before the next sea came, our own headway together with the flood tide had carried us in, out of its reach. Meantime Louie was bailing away for dear life, throwing the water out of the boat as fast as he could. A few minutes later I ran the boat's nose into the sand shore around the south point, the same landing we used when here in the *Creole* some years before. Throwing the anchor on shore, and taking in sail was only a minute's job. Then we spread our bedding on the sand to dry as much as possible in the wind before dark, and prepared to spend the night there.

We were by this time very thirsty, not having a drop of any kind of drink since early morning. Leaving Louie to prepare supper, I jumped in the canoe and went up Cypress Creek looking for fresh water. I went up the creek for near a mile but as the tide was up, the creek was blue salt water all the way. The sun went down as I paddled up stream and I was forced to return to camp without having found any fresh water.

It was a dry supper we had that night, no tea, coffee or water. There was just one thing in our favor. The weather turned cold after the sun went down so we did not suffer so much from thirst as we would had the night been hot. We went to sleep early to keep from thinking, "Oh! how dry I am."

Next morning just as the sun was coming up from the sea I awoke, got up and went to the water's edge to wash the sleep from my eyes and have a look around to see if there was any chance of finding water to drink. We had to have it before going to sea again, that was sure. I was thinking of going up Cypress Creek until I found fresh water if it took me half a day. Yet I did not want to lose any time for the sea was smooth now and the wind blowing a gentle breeze from the northwest. An ideal morning for a run to the south. Looking across the water I saw something on the north side of the inlet that caused me to run to the tent and yell to wake Louie, telling him to get

up and see what damned fools we had been to go thirsty all night.

Louie came crawling out from under his mosquito bar saying, "What are you talking so crazy about?"

"Look there," I answered, "do you see those coconut trees loaded with young green nuts, and those nuts are full of the best drinking water to be found? Come on, let's go."

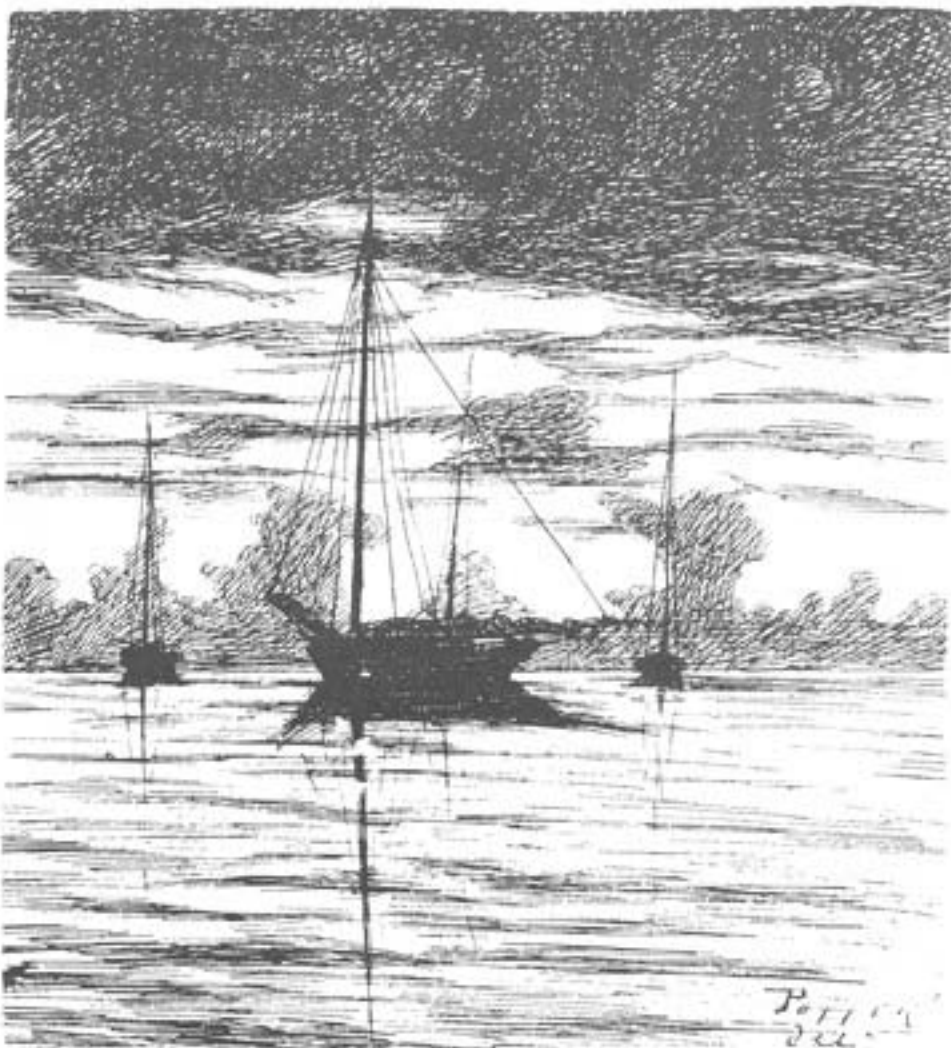
We did not waste any time in getting into the *Dolly* and poling her to the other side of the inlet where the big coconut trees were growing near the water's edge. In about two minutes I was in the top of the nearest tree throwing down the green coconuts. Only two nuts went down to Louie before I stopped to open one and have the finest drink I ever tasted. The night had been cool and the milk or water of the nuts was clear, cold and delicious. It must be remembered that we had been without water for twenty-four hours. I cut and threw down to Louie about a dozen of these water bottles to carry with us.

Went back to camp feeling much better and no longer thirsty. We made coffee

with the coconut milk, which in young nuts like these is nothing more or less than pure water. We enjoyed that breakfast with plenty of hot coffee to wash it down, something we had not had since the morning before leaving the haulover at the sound end of Lake Worth.

The sea was calm this morning. The big ground swells of yesterday had all disappeared, leaving the ocean as smooth as a pond. The wind was blowing a fine breeze from the northwest as we sailed out the inlet. I now decided to leave the canoe at the Lauderdale Station until I could come back and give it a coat of paint on the outside, it was leaking so badly, and the *Dolly* was in the same condition. I would not [be] able to hail both boats as I sailed after Louie left me. So I told him when we arrived at the Station we would anchor and he could land himself and his dunnage in the canoe. Then I would go on to Biscayne Bay in the *Dolly*.

We arrived at the Fort Lauderdale Station about ten o'clock. The wind had by this time hauled to the north, but the sea was still smooth. I let go the *Dolly's*



Sailboats at anchor somewhere along the southeast Florida coast. Charles Pierce often anchored at Hillsboro and New River inlets (George W. Potter drawing, courtesy of Marjorie P. Stewart).



ON THE RUN

"On the Run," George Potter's depiction of deer hunting in south Florida (illustration courtesy of Marjorie P. Stewart).

anchor, pulled the canoe alongside. Louie got on board of her with his dunnage and paddled for shore, waving goodbye to me as he started. His folks were waiting for him and I saw them drag the canoe high up on shore after he landed. I now noticed that the *Dolly* for some reason was broadside to the wind, and my first thought was a strong tide was setting up the coast against the wind, but could not understand what caused it. I ran forward to pull up the anchor, and I did not have one; had lost it and was drifting down the coast before the wind. My next stop would be on the beach at the Biscayne Station so did not worry over the loss of the anchor. Picking up an oar, I swung her head off, pulled in the mainsheet and went bounding away over the waves for Biscayne Station and home.

[I was] alone on the ocean in a little sail boat for the first time. Had sailed up and down the coast from Jupiter inlet to Biscayne Bay, in various boats, but this was the first time I had been out at sea alone, and was somewhat nervous and just a little excited at my situation, but not in the least afraid for I knew if anything happened to me or the boat I could run her on shore and would be within a few hours walking distance of home, or my friends at the Lauderdale Station.

Enjoyed it just the same, sailing over

a bright blue sea, but did not have much time for day dreaming. The leaks in the *Dolly's* bottom kept me busy bailing with my left hand, while I steered with the right.

As I passed New River inlet the wind hauled to the northeast, but kept blowing just a nice sailing breeze for the little boat. The sea kicked up a little, enough to cause the *Dolly* to bob around lively, just enough to make it interesting sailing. Noontime came, but there was not a thing cooked on board. We did not have anything left over at breakfast that morning, and we did not want to take time to cook something for lunch. Anyway Louie knew he would be home long before dinner time, as for myself I had been so used to going without food in the last few weeks, the missing of a meal did not matter.

After about two weeks I again became restless and tired of loafing around the house. I planned another hunting trip to the flatwoods west of Hypoluxo with Louie. If we could kill two or three deer, I reasoned, we could sell the meat up the lake for enough to pay our expenses, and at the same time have the pleasure of a week or so in the woods in our good old hunting grounds.

[I] made a large knapsack out of a piece of black oilcloth. This knapsack

was used to carry my camp dunnage and ammunition, and together with my 10 pound shotgun made a very heavy load to tote, as the crackers say, near sixty miles up the coast.

When packed up and ready to go, got a ride as far as New River with Captain Hammon in the *Ina*. There persuaded Louie to pack up and join me in my tramp up the beach to Lake Worth. When we arrived at Hillsborough we found the Gleason boys there in their sloop, *Vixen*. The Gleason family were moving to Eau Gallie on Indian River, and the *Vixen* was loaded with their household goods. Only the two boys, Will and George, were aboard this trip. They invited us to spend the rest of the day and night with them. George said, "That is a heavy load you two are carrying, better stay with us and have a good rest. You will feel more like walking in the morning after a night's rest and will be in better shape for that sixteen mile tramp to Steve's."

They did not have to urge us to stay. Our loads had been heavier than we anticipated at the start, and tho' we had only walked nine miles that day, [we] were pretty well tired out when we arrived at Hillsborough.

The next morning came in calm, but as there was every indication of a hard

northeaster coming in, the Gleasons decided to remain inside. And it was well they did, for we had not gone half a mile when it came down on us full force with almost continuous squalls of rain. By the time we had gone three or four miles [we] were wet to the skin and shivering with cold.

The wind was blowing so hard against us we made very slow time. Louie was not at all well and I had to stop every mile or so for him to rest. Besides we were shivering and blue with cold. At noon we had come only seven miles. There was still nine long miles ahead before we could gain the shelter of the Orange Grove Station, and the day now half gone.

Truly the prospect was most discouraging. I could have walked faster and thereby warmed up a lot, but Louie could not stand the pace. We had just started on, after one of our frequent rests when I saw a clear glass bottle that was about half full of some amber colored fluid. Picking it up and pulling the cork, I smelled of it and it smelled all right, then I tasted it. "What is it?" asked Louie. "Brandy, boy, French brandy," was my answer, and without stopping to consider that it might not be fit to drink, in fact might contain poison, I turned the bottle up and took a good swallow. Then, of course, Louie had to have a drink. It certainly put new life in us at once and warmed us as only cognac could. We made better time after finding this half pint and made it last as long as possible. The brandy was the very thing poor Louie needed. We did not have to stop for him to rest after finding it and made good time up the beach. Arrived at the Orange Grove Station in time for supper that Steve was cooking as we walked in on him, cold, wet and tired out, and of course, very hungry.

HUNTING ON HILLSBORO CREEK AND MORE JOURNEYS ALONG BEACH AND GLADES

Shortly after my arrival at the [Biscayne] Station I now called home [in the spring of 1883], the repair gang finished their work of repairing and moved to Fort Lauderdale and commenced work on that Station.

Remained at home for some time; a week or more, and in the meantime was planning a hunting trip with Louie for Plume birds. We had talked this trip over when coming down the coast in the *Dolly*. We decided there should be some nesting places of plume birds in the Cypress creek region or perhaps at the head of Snook creek. In the interim I kept busy getting my canoe and camping outfit in condition.

Had brought with me from Lake Worth a large buck's hide and the skin of an extra large wildcat that I had killed sometime before leaving Hypoluxo Island. Removed the hair from the deer skin by soaking in water mixed with hardwood ashes. Lime would have been better but I did not have the lime. I then gathered some red mangrove bark and tanned the deer skin a rich dark mahogany. I made a cape from this deer skin to go around my shoulders. This served two purposes, first to keep the upper part of my body dry in rainy weather and to protect my shirt from wear of the gun on my shoulders. Around the bottom edge of this cape I made a lot of small holes about an inch apart. In these holes I tied leather thongs of about a foot in length. These strings had the appearance of a deep fringe around the cape, but they were not for ornament. They were called "tie-ups" and were to be used in place of string or cord whenever needed in the woods. This idea was not original with me. I got it from the Indians, and later found the thongs most useful.

The wildcat skin was not tanned. I made a hunting cap from it in the most primitive way. The skin was hard and stiff. I cut out a flat piece the size of the top of my head, then a two inch strip for the sides. This strip, when sewed on to the flat top, made a square joint more useful than handsome. This side strip was cut in such a manner the tail was left on, and when sewed on, the tail was right in the middle part of the back of the cap. And as it was hard and dry it stuck straight out behind when on my head. A queer looking cap but it served its purpose well in the woods and was the cause of me killing more than one piece of game that I never would have got within range of, had I been wearing any other kind of hat.

My canoe was now well painted and ready for use. My camping outfit, gun and ammunition all ready for that hunting trip to the head waters of Snook and the Hillsborough [Hillsboro] Creeks.

[I] had rigged a lateen sail on the canoe and only waited for a day when wind and sea were right for a run up the coast to New River. On arising one morning, found the condition of wind and sea perfect for my trip. Was off about ten o'clock that morning. I kept near the shore for I did not trust the thin 8 ounce canvas the canoe was covered with much, and preferred to keep within swimming distance of the land.

Made the trip all right without any difficulties of any kind, the canoe sailing along over the sea at a good rate of speed. I was pleased with her behavior under sail. Arrived at the Fort Lauderdale boat landing early in the afternoon. Was distressed to hear on my arrival that Guy and his oldest sister were very sick from the same mysterious malady that afflict-

ed Wash Jenkins when we moved him to the Bay last fall. Flora, who was about ten years old, died that afternoon only a few minutes after I got there. The workmen engaged in repairing the Station made a coffin and she was buried the next day under a wide spreading sea grape tree in the hammock northwest of the house. Guy was swelled up so badly he could not walk. I carried him to the grave.

This sad incident took all the pleasure out of our lives for the time being, and our hunting trip was deferred for a few days.

We started one morning making our way up what was then called Hillsborough Creek, so called because its head waters were near Hillsborough inlet. We had never been up this creek before and made slow time finding our way through its crooks and turns and shallow water at its upper end. We were near Cypress creek when we had to stop on account of shallow water.

Made camp in the pine woods on the west side of the marsh, then hunted back in the swamps to the west. We could see plenty of plume birds flying far to the west but could not locate the nesting place. Here I saw far up in the air two scarlet ibis flying west, the only scarlet birds I have ever seen.

Two days later we returned to the Station. No luck at all, not having killed one plume bird. We decided there were too many hunting Indians in that part of the country. When within two miles of our home landing [we] were overtaken by a heavy rainstorm. It just poured down for half an hour. We did not have any way to get out of it so kept on our way down the creek through it all. We were like a pair of drowned rats when we arrived at the Station, cold and hungry.

The next morning came in clear and fine. A cool west wind was blowing and not a cloud in sight. We determined on a cruise up Snook creek, so hurriedly ate our breakfast and departed. We used two boats this time. Louie was in the old Indian canoe and I used my canvas boat. Just why we did this when either canoe was large enough to carry both of us and our camp dunnage, I cannot say at this time, but we did and left in such a hurry I forgot my tent, and did not notice that it had been left until we were more than a mile up Middle River (Snook Creek). I told Louie to poke along up the river while I went back for it. I told him I would be as quick as possible. My canoe was too large to navigate with a paddle. I had rigged her with a pair of oars and rowlocks. I turned about and made fast time back to the landing where my tent lay on the grass near the dock. Picking it up and throwing it into the canoe, I turned her around and started back to rejoin Louie and do my best not to delay the trip, by rowing as fast as I could.

When I built this canoe I decided an 8 ounce duck was rather thin covering for so large a boat, to make a water tight bulkhead at the forward end of the cockpit; access to the part forward of the bulkhead was through openings in the forward deck, which were covered with canvas flaps.

Was pulling hard on the oars and the canoe was making fast time up river when there came a crash accompanied by a ripping sound forward. The canoe came to a sudden stop. So sudden that I was thrown on my back on the floor of the cockpit.

To say that I was surprised is putting it mildly. Scrambling to my feet I looked all around and could not see what had stopped the canoe, but there she was standing stock still in the middle of the stream and I noticed the current was running along on each side same as if she was at anchor. It was more than a hundred feet to the nearest shore. [I] picked up an oar and sounded the water alongside. It was deep, could not touch bottom with the six foot oar [and] was sure puzzled. Then I heard the tinkling sound of running water that came from under the forward deck. Lifting up the canvas flaps that did duty as a hatch cover, at once saw the cause of all this mystery. A lightwood snag was sticking up through the canoe's bottom under the forward deck about two feet back from the bow. It had torn a hole from one rib to the other, a distance of eight inches. The water tight bulkhead was the only thing that kept the canoe from going to the bottom at once.

The snag was sticking up through the bottom near[ly] a foot, and the only way to get loose from it was to lift the canoe up off the snag. But how to do it was the question. Meantime the water was leaking up through the bulkhead, slow but sure, and it was a question of minutes now when the canoe and all my camp dunnage would go to the bottom of the creek if I did not get her on shore quickly. Sliding over the side I swam to the bow and felt around the snag for a foot hold, keeping a sharp lookout meanwhile for alligators that might become interested in me while I was in the water. The water of the creek was of the usual kind that flows from the swamps of Florida, black as ink when deep. That is it appears black in the deep places, caused no doubt partly by the tanning washed from the roots along its banks and the black muck bottom. I found a projecting knot on the snag with my left foot. Standing on that, I lifted the canoe clear of the snag. Then swam around to the stern and kicked her to shore, on the east side of the creek where I found I was up against more trouble.

The bank was about four feet high and straight up at that. Deep water coming close in, there was no beach at

all, only about a foot wide of shallow water. I could not keep the canoe from sinking by holding it against the bank but that was all I could do without Louie's help, and there was no telling how far up the creek he might be at this time. If he was now beyond hearing of my gun signal I was in a fix sure enough. Picking up my gun I fired it, counting thirty, fired the second shot and again counting thirty fired the third shot. This was an agreed signal we always used to call for help in the woods. Right after my third shot the boom of a shotgun came in answer just around the bend of the river above me. Louie had been waiting for me the other side of the point, and soon came in sight paddling down the creek. I was certainly glad to see that boy coming to my aid.

We loaded the stuff into his boat and then towed the canoe across the river to a sand bank where we hauled her out for repairs. I carried repair material in the shape of new canvas, thread and needles. Also a can of white lead to make the patch water tight. After the hole was patched we ate our lunch and were on our way again by one thirty. The patch did not leak a drop and the canoe was again in good shape.

Kept on until late in the afternoon when the river became a shallow narrow creek. The bushes growing high and thick on either bank and meeting overhead, prevented us from seeing any birds that might be flying by.

Night was now coming on and we had to find a place to camp without delay if possible. We landed and found the shore low and swampy. With the axe I cut out a trail through the scrub to a patch of ground that was comparatively dry. This was about a hundred feet from the boats. Here we prepared to spend the night by clearing a space large enough for our tent and campfire. The floor of the tent was full of humps and stubs of the cut bushes. We fixed this by cutting a lot of small branches of the myrtle, piling them in the tent until we had a ground covering about two feet thick. This made a good soft bed that eliminated the bumps underneath. We were pretty tired after a rather strenuous day and soon were asleep.

Was awakened next morning at daylight by a tremendous bellow that, coming to us while half asleep, sounded as if it was right at the door of the tent. As soon as we were awake enough to understand what we were hearing, we knew it was the bellow of a bull alligator, calling out his morning challenge to the other male reptiles that might be within hearing of his rumble call. I got up, opened the flap of the tent and looked out. There was the old fellow alongside of our boats in the creek, and as I whispered to Louie to come and look, he swelled up, opened his huge mouth and let out another blubbing bellow, a noise

loud enough to be heard half a mile on a still morning like this was. We stepped outside the tent. The gator saw us and at once sinking under the water made off down the creek and we saw him no more.

While eating breakfast we talked the situation over and decided the country was N. G. when it came to hunting plume birds. Too many Indians close by was our verdict, and [we decided] that we better go straight home and give up the plume hunting business for this season. So immediately after breakfast we packed up and started back down river. On our way down you can bet I kept a sharp lookout for lightwood snags in the channel, and steered a course well away from both banks of the stream.

On the way up the day before I had noticed some queer looking rock-like formations on the south bank of the river in one or two places, and as we came to it on our way back I stopped to have a look at them. I found it to be a sort of ocher. It was as soft as chalk and the color of yellow ocher. I broke off a few pieces to take home with me. I had seen a kind of paint that was found up the Miami River, that when used in its natural state was a kind of yellow. But when baked in a fire [it] became a dark reddish brown. The people on the Bay called it Spanish brown. I believed this was some of the same stuff.

We arrived back at the Station early in the afternoon, and an hour or so later Mr. Champ H. Spencer, the superintendent of the Houses of Refuge came in on an inspecting trip. He had George Charter as a boatman. Heretofore Mr. Spencer had been making his inspection trips by sail boat down the coast on the ocean, which was very uncertain on account of having to wait for fair weather and a smooth sea. And sometimes more than a week was wasted in this manner. This time he proposed to make the trip from the Orange Grove Station to the Bay by canoe inside through the Swamps and Everglades, hoping thereby to make better time on his inspection trip.

Steve Andrews had hauled the canoe from Lake Worth to the Orange Grove Station where they launched it in the swamp back of that Station and made their way through that swamp to Boca Raton and Hillsborough river. Then up Cypress creek to Lettuce Lake and on through an almost impassable marsh to Hillsborough creek where we had been hunting only a few days before. This route would have been quite easy in the fall and winter, but in the spring when the water is at its lowest it is impassable except in a case like this when the boat was small and light, and there was a very strong man to haul it over the mud and shallows. George Charter was such a man.

They had a factory made canoe. It was small and cranky and with the load they carried, drew too much water for

some of the shallow places they were compelled to pass through. They remained at the Station that night, and George said they were going on next day to Biscayne Bay by way of the Everglades and I at once proposed to accompany them as I was ready to return home.

George said, "Good, glad to have you along to show me the way through the Glades. Have never been there and we might go a long ways out of our way if left to find it ourselves."

We started soon after breakfast the next morning and all went along smoothly until we were well into the Glades. Then trouble commenced for my friends in their overloaded canoe. Every little ways their canoe would stop hard and fast on the bottom. Then George would jump overboard with the bowline over his shoulder and "snake" the boat along to deeper water. The first time it hit bottom Mr. Spencer jumped overboard to lighten the load and help push. This did not suit George at all. He told Mr. Spencer in a very loud voice to remain in the canoe where he belonged. In a few minutes they hit another shallow spot. George at once stepped overboard and started to haul the canoe over the shallow. Then he saw Mr. Spencer was making ready to get out of the canoe. He stood still and shouted at the top of his voice, "Sit down! Sit down, I tell you I don't need your help. You stay in the boat."

And if Mr. Spencer would insist on getting out of the canoe, as he did a few times, George would stand and yell at him loud enough to be heard two miles away. Meantime my canoe was gliding along easily, not touching the bottom in any place. I had a picnic watching those two fight it out about getting over the shallow spots. For about three miles it was nearly all shallow places and the going was hard for George and the superintendent.

Just before sundown a rain squall came down on us and lasted long enough to wet everything. We were a little over half way through the Glades when the sun set and then we had to look for a camping place, any piece of land above the water would have to do. It was all we could expect in that watery waste.

The first little island we examined contained just enough ground above water on which to place our beds and campfire. It turned out to be a very uncomfortable camp. The ground was wet and soggy and full of lumps and stumps of dead bushes. There were not enough small green branches of myrtle to build up our beds and we spent a very poor night, and got covered with that tormenting pest of the Florida swamps — red bugs.

We were up and getting breakfast at the first streaks of dawn, only too glad to hurry away from this most uncomfortable camp. About an hour later we passed the place where I had pulled the

canoe through the mud and became so hungry from the extra hard work that I ate dry tea, on my previous trip.

Soon we were in Snake Creek and making fast time with a strong current in our favor. When we came to the creek that comes in from Dumsfounding Bay, we met a boat load of coast survey men on their way to their schooner that had been anchored near Miami most of the winter. They were making a survey and plotting charts of the inland waters of this coast.

We arrived at Biscayne Station early in the afternoon. Mr. Spencer and George started back on their return trip next morning, and for a wonder I did not want to go with them. As a matter of fact I was quite willing to remain at home for a time.

The Gleasons were moving their household goods up the coast to Eau Gallie on Indian River, as fast as weather and sea would permit. When I arrived at the Station found they were again loading for another trip up the coast. George Hunt, who had been living with the Gleasons, and was the same age as Will Gleason, was making preparations to move to Lake Worth. He owned a small two masted boat, named *Mischief*, that he wanted sailed to the Lake and [he] came to the Station one day to see if I would sail her to the lake for him and what I would charge to do the job. I wanted to know why didn't he take her up there himself. He said he did not have the time. In my opinion, however, he was afraid to go to sea in her. She was only twenty feet long, of narrow beam and cranky. No decks, open from stem to stern, and carried about a thousand pounds of rock stowed away under her floor for ballast. If she should happen to ship a heavy sea, she would go to the bottom like the ballast she carried. I agreed to sail the *Mischief* to the Lake and of course would have to walk the beach 60 miles back home, for \$10. George had a guitar valued at \$5 that I wanted so he gave me the instrument and an order on Dr. [Richard B.] Potter at the Lake for the other five and the deal was closed.

Waited for a good spell of weather and when it came, started out alone. Ran into New River to spend the night. I hoped to get Louie or his father to go with me the rest of the trip. It so happened Mr. Bradley had some business up at the lake that he wanted to look after, and he said he would go with me. We started out early next morning. The wind was blowing a fine breeze from south southeast and the sea smooth. We made a quick and uneventful trip, running into Lake Worth inlet a little before dark. From the inlet down to the settlement the wind was ahead and it was rather late when we arrived at Mr. Geer's, where we spent the

night. Mr. Bradley left me here; the next morning I sailed the *Mischief* down to Dr. Potter's and delivered her to him. The next day I started for home, walking down the beach. The first night I spent at Steve Andrews', the next at Fort Lauderdale and arrived home at the Biscayne Station early the next afternoon.

A LONELY TRIP

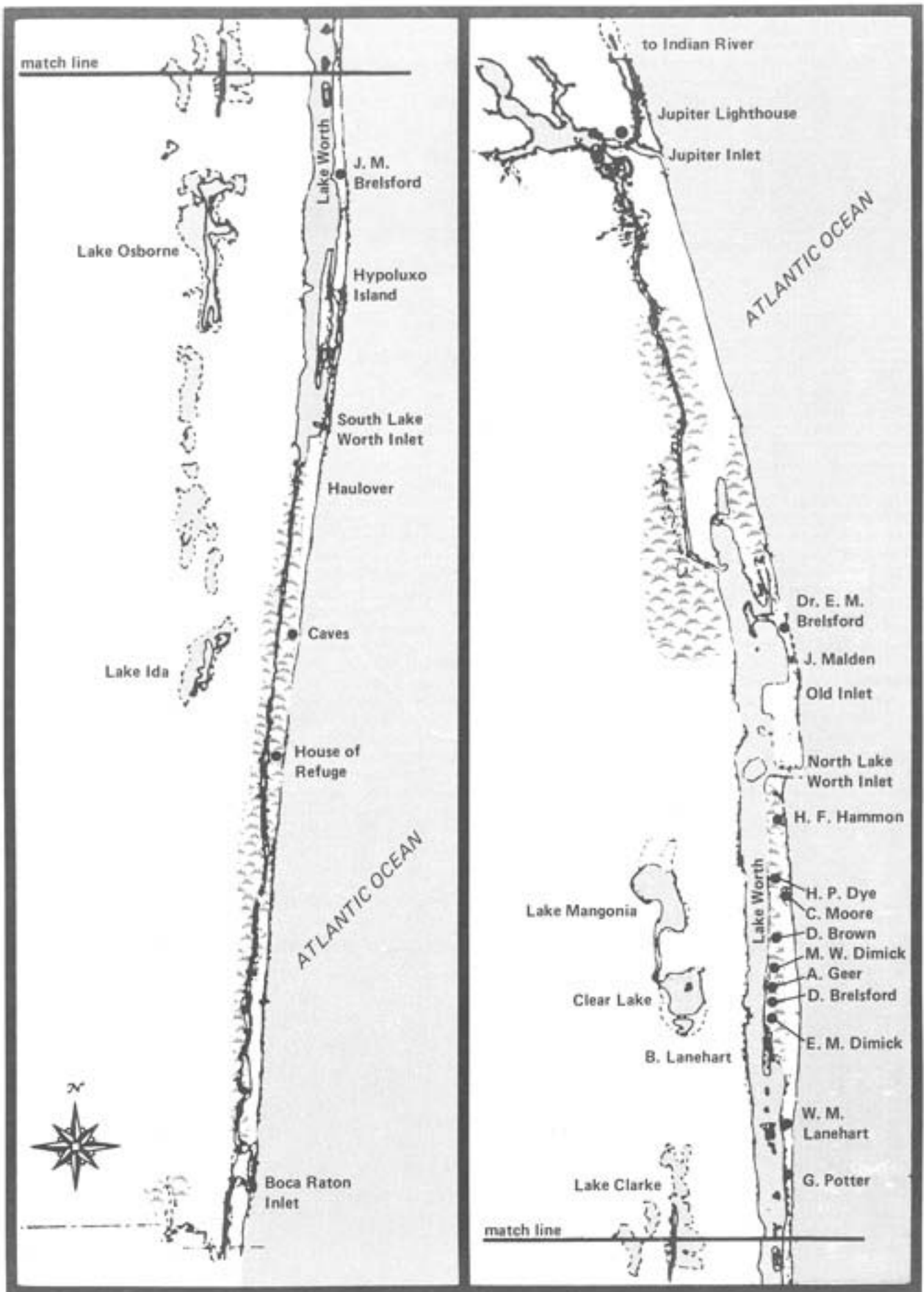
In the latter part of the summer of 1884 Mr. Bradley resigned his position as keeper of the Fort Lauderdale Home of Refuge, and moved his family back to his place on Lake Worth. Jack Peacock from Biscayne Bay was appointed to take Bradley's place. [Shortly thereafter, Charles Pierce traveled to Lake Worth to hunt deer with Bradley's sons, Louie and Guy.]

When about a mile from [our hunting] camp on our way home [to the Bradleys'], we met Mr. Bradley in [Michael] Merkel's [an early settler of Lake Osborne, west of Lake Worth] boat. He had a stranger with him, and introduced me to him saying, "This gentleman is a surveyor. He wants to have a look at the country to the south and west, and is employed by a company that is thinking of running a railroad through this part of Florida sometime in the future. He has hired me to show it to him and I would like to have the use of your skiff. Merkel wants his back right away and I told him you would bring it back. So if you will swap places with us we will go on and you can go on home."

[I] did not like this arrangement a little bit. They would have the use of my boat for nothing and I would have to go on home when there was nothing that would have suited me better than to have taken this man on his surveying trip to the south. But I soon saw that Mr. Bradley had his mind made up and wanted to keep the job. If I did not agree with his plans there would be hard feeling on his part, so we swapped boats and went on, arriving at the Bradleys' about noon, where I remained the rest of the day and night.

Right after dinner the next day I asked the boys to take me to the haul-over at the foot of the Lake in their sail boat, and I would start for home, intending to spend the night with Steve Andrews at the Station. They complied with my request and I arrived at the Station about two o'clock, only to find the Station locked up and Steve gone, and there was no telling when he would return. He might be away for two or three days, so there was not a bit of use in waiting for him.

As Steve would have said under like circumstances, "Here's a go sure enough." I could not go back to Bradley's; there was no way to cross the lake to their place, they having sailed right back home



The Lake Worth country where Charles Pierce lived most of his life (map courtesy of Mrs. Robert Powell).

after landing me. And Fort Lauderdale Station, the first habitation to the south, was twenty-five long miles down the beach. Of course, the distance meant nothing much to me had there been plenty of time. But here it was after two o'clock in the afternoon, when heretofore I had always started on this longest of trips right after breakfast. Now I was at least six hours late. That would bring my arrival at Lauderdale Station around ten o'clock that night, provided I could cross Hillsborough inlet without loss of time. I knew the tide would be at the top when I got there, and I stood a minute or so thinking it over. Then saying to myself, "Don't cross an inlet before you get to it," I wheeled about and made off down the beach at a rapid walk. There was no time to waste if I would reach the inlet before dark, and I had to do it or stay out on the beach all night; I never would attempt to cross that inlet after dark without a boat. So I never slackened my gait until I arrived at the inlet which was just as the sun was setting behind a heavy bank of storm clouds far to the west over the Everglades.

The tide was full high as I expected, and was now slackening. Soon it would turn out, and when it did the current would become too strong for any sort of a raft that I might construct with no better tools than my bare hands and a pocket knife.

I walked along the shore of the inlet looking for something that would float. The only thing in sight was the dry stump of an old tree, cast up on shore by an unusual high tide at some previous time. It was perfectly dry and would float, but there was not enough of it to carry me over to the south shore, unless I got in and swam with it. This I did not propose to do. It was now too dark to see if there were any sharks or alligators waiting to

take a bite of anything that might come within reach. I turned back up the beach looking for something to go with my stump that would take me safely across the inlet. I had only walked a short distance when I came upon a large bamboo. It was about twenty feet long and four inches in diameter, each joint a perfect air chamber. Then right near it I found another bamboo, long and slender, that would do nicely for a pole to navigate my raft — if a stump and bamboo tied together might be called such. The next question was, where was I to find something to take the place of rope in tying the bamboo to the stump? Well, I did not know, and as I walked along with the bamboo on my shoulder, was wondering what I could do about it, when I came to a patch of long bean vines. These beans, sometimes called Goat's foot beans, grow only on the sea beach, and make very long large vines. When I saw them I exclaimed aloud, "Here are my ropes to tie the raft."

Hurrying back to the inlet, I threw the bamboos alongside the stump and went back to the bean patch and gathered enough vines for my use on the raft, and ran back to the inlet — yes, ran, for it was by this time nearly dark and the tide was about to start running out. Rolling the stump into the water, I tied the bamboo to it, and taking the pole in hand stepped on the board of as flimsy a craft as one could imagine. By this time the tide was slowly moving towards the sea. Soon it would be running like a mill race. My so-called raft sunk partly under water when I got on board, and my feet were about two inches under water. It did not take more than three minutes to reach the other side. As my fragile craft touched the shore I jumped and landed on solid sand. It certainly felt good under my feet once again.

When I jumped on shore the bean vine ropes broke, the stump and bamboo parted company and drifted out to sea. Turning about after watching the destruction of my raft, I started down the beach for Lauderdale. It was not very dark and I was hungry; more hungry than tired, although I had walked twenty-one miles since dinner, and had yet another nine to go before I would have food and rest.

Arrived at the Fort Lauderdale Station near nine o'clock. The keeper, Jack Peacock, was greatly surprised to see me walking in on them at that time of night, and wanted to know at once where I had been wasting my time. When he found that I had come all the way from Bradleys' since noon, he ceased to wonder at the lateness of my arrival. Well, I got my supper even if it was sometime beyond their usual hour, and a little later a good bed, both of which came in good that night.

After breakfast next morning, Captain Jack took me down the four miles of New River in his little sail boat and landed me on the south shore of the inlet. Mrs. Peacock had also given me a lunch to take with me as I could not get to the Biscayne Station until long after dinner time. When about five miles below the inlet, I sat down and ate my lunch, not that I was hungry so early, but it was much easier to carry that way.

Walked in on my folks about three o'clock that afternoon and surprised them by my unlooked-for return, and was in turn surprised to find there my uncle, R. B. Moore and Aunt Ursula. They had come from Chicago by train to Cedar Keys, then by steamer to Key West, and then by the mail schooner *Floza*, Captain Smart, to Biscayne Bay.

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