History of the Orange Industry in Florida

James A. Harris

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(Note—Mr. Harris may be said to have begun the orange industry in Florida for profit. Before he began operations on Orange Lake in 1870, there were a few small orange groves at Mandarin, Palatka and St. Augustine, but no oranges were grown for export.

Mr. Harris was not only the first to introduce the Florida orange into the markets of New York, Boston and Philadelphia, but he was first also to place on the markets the grapefruit which has since become so popular and profitable. He was quite successful, shipped quantities of fruit and wild trees for planting purposes, and for a long time was called the "Orange King of Florida," but the title was not pleasing to him as he was too much imbued with the spirit of our institutions to covet titles.

—Editor Banner.)

Girardville, Pa., July 7, 1919.

To the Editor Banner:

Some time ago my friend, Mr. John Kendig, of Philadelphia, (who owns a valuable orange property east of Sparr, in your county) requested me to write an article for your paper describing the development of the orange industry, especially around Orange Lake and more especially in the vicinity of Citra. As I have some spare time, I will try and comply with his request.

Orange Lake was so named on account of the great number of wild orange trees (the sour and bitter sweet varieties), found in the hammocks around the borders of that lake. While the wild orange is found growing in various parts of the peninsula of Florida, I firmly believe there were more of these trees growing around Orange Lake than in all the rest of the State; therefore it was very properly named.

While it is generally believed that the wild orange is indigenous to Florida, I always contended to the contrary, and I think it was first brought to Florida by the Spaniards in their early settlement of St. Augustine. And my reasons for thinking so are these: At that time the sour and bitter sweet orange was extensively grown in Spain, and was called the sour and bitter, Seville Aurantium. The sweet or China orange was only beginning to be introduced into Spain from the far East. And as the sour and bitter Seville orange contains more or less citric acid, so beneficial for sailors to use on a long sea voyage, and was abundantly grown in Spain at that time, it was only natural for the Spaniards to take with them all of this fruit that they well could. And the Indians from the
interior went to St. Augustine to trade or barter with the white men, no doubt took this fruit home with them and dropped or planted the seed near their settlements, for in all the wild orange groves of any size in Florida are always found signs of Indian habitation—Indian mounds, where they buried their dead, arrow heads, pottery, etc., and in the course of time, say several hundred years, the seed so dropped or planted, grew into trees and spread over the adjacent land, and thus in the course of time had every appearance of being indigenous to the soil. We only find these wild oranges growing in the hammock land, and generally around the borders of lakes and along the rivers, because this kind of land is timbered with a dense growth of hardwood trees and it is generally so damp that forest fires will not burn, while the pine lands are different, and forest fires burn there quite fiercely and destroy all such growth as orange trees, and this is the reason why they are not found growing in a wild state on the pine lands. The Indians were noted for setting the forests on fire.

Another fact that convinces me that the orange is not indigenous to Florida is this: In the early settlement of the Floridas, an Englishman traveled and explored the peninsular part of the Floridas, and wrote a book describing the fruits and flora that he found growing there and he did not mention the orange, which he surely would have done if he had found it growing in a wild state. Major Geo. R. Fairbanks, of Fernandina, had a copy of this book and no doubt some member of his family has it yet, for he prized it very highly. All that part of the interior west from St. Augustine, and where Orange Lake is located, was thickly inhabited by Indians and on account of the security from forest fires they always settled on the hammock lands.

As I have stated, a number of these wild orange trees were found in the hammocks bordering this lake, and in all of them signs of Indian habitation can be seen. The largest and the most easterly of these wild orange tracts was the Dr. Byrne tract of 500 acres, densely covered with sour orange trees, many acres having at least ten thousand of these trees to the acre. Going west a short distance from the Byrne tract we come to the Stephen W. Cowle tract of at least two hundred acres. From this tract going west for about three miles, only scattering orange trees were found, when we come to the southwest corner of the lake, where we find the Paul McCormick and William Hickson tract (better known as the club house grove, because a number of people clubbed together and purchased an acre of this tract and built a club house on it, which was used for dancing, picnic and fishing parties.) This tract originally contained about 200 acres but the owners, Paul McCormick and Wm. Hickson, cleared a large part of it, cutting down and burning the orange trees along with the forest trees, for farming purposes, mostly to grow Sea Island cotton, which was grown very extensively in that part of the State, and was said to be equally
as fine staple as that grown on the sea
islands of South Carolina.

While most of the orange trees in the
Byrne tract were of the sour variety (I
only found two bitter sweet trees in the
whole tract), the Cowle tract, while
mostly sour, had a good many bitter
sweet trees. But in the club house tract
the most of the trees were of the bitter
sweet variety. From the club house
grove we go north for a few miles where
there were only scattering orange trees,
when we come to the Prestly orange
tract, I would say of about 200 acres.
The oranges on this tract were mostly
bitter sweet. From here we go east
across the lake, and come to the tracts
owned by the Widow Blake, Maj. Geo.
R. Fairbanks, Mr. Adger Clark and
others, on what is called Island Grove,
lying to the east and north of Orange
Lake and south of Lochloosa. I would
think all the tracts at Island Grove
contained about 300 acres of what would
be called wild orange land. While you find
the wild orange growing in many parts
of the peninsula of Florida, there are
larger tracts (and more of them) of
wild oranges found on Orange Lake
than in any other part of the State, and
thus this lake was properly named Or-
ange Lake. On these tracts the orange
trees constituted about all the under-
growth; the hardwood forest trees tow-
ered up high above them, as the orange
trees grew so thick on the land they
could not spread out, but grew up tall
and slender with very small tops. Their
trunks were generally from two to four
inches in diameter and twelve to thirty
feet high, without a limb or branch un-
til you got to the small top. The sun
never penetrated to the ground, and
therefore it was quite damp, but so cool
and nice in the hot summer days the
flowers would drop early in April, when
all the ground beneath the trees would
be carpeted with a thick mat of white
flowers, and their odor would be most
overpowering. There was a great deal
more real beauty in the wild orange
groves than afterwards when they were
converted into sweet groves. The tall
forest trees protected the orange trees
growing beneath them, from frost as
well as from forest fires. I have not got
a dollar’s interest in any property at Cit-
ra or on Orange Lake. I truly think that
the soil of the hammock lands bordering
on Orange Lake and especially that in
the vicinity of Citra, as a whole, is better
adapted to the growth of the orange than
that of any other part of the State that I
know about, it being a dry, rich, allu-
vial, well drained soil, intermixed with
more or less small pebbles, very little
rock and no saw palmetto, and no hard-
pan; in fact, it is an ideal soil for the
orange.

It was a big undertaking to convert
these wild orange tracts into sweet
groves, for they were very heavily tim-
bered with large hardwood forest trees.
We first sawed or cut off with a sharp
axe (the axe preferred to the saw) the
orange trees from two to four feet above
the ground, cutting up and piling the
trunks and tops, then we cut down the
forest trees, but leaving quite a number
of them (especially the live oak) stand-
ing for a protection against freezing
weather. We would cut up these fallen
forest trees and put them into piles and let them rot, thus adding a very valuable fertilizer to the soil. Next we budded or grafted the orange stumps with the different varieties of the orange, grapefruit (sometimes called pomelo), lemon, lime, citron, etc. You can bud or graft on one orange tree as many varieties of the citrus fruits as you choose, and each bud will bear fruit of its own variety, thus you can put in the same stump as many varieties of the orange as you like, and the same of the lemon, lime, citron, tangerine, mandarin, etc. The fruit will not mix, and will not be affected by the stock that you bud into; but I do not advise anyone to do this unless you want to have a few such trees as a curiosity. I would only have one bud to the tree. If you put in more than one I would cut out all but one, and it is best to use buds or grafts without thorns, and in making a grove try and keep each variety or kind separate. When I started to make a grove there was an erroneous idea prevailing that you should use only budwood from a sweet seedling tree. It was claimed by the knowing ones that trees budded with budwood taken from a budded tree would bear fruit that would be true to the bud for a few years and then gradually go back until the fruit would be the same as the root of the tree from which you took your budwood; that is, if you used budwood from a tree budded on sour roots, your tree would gradually go back until your fruit would be sour; therefore we only used budwood taken from sweet seedling trees, and at that time—1871 and 1872—there was very few sweet orange trees growing in Marion County, and we had to go miles for budwood. I bought two trees from Judge Means; one was at his old home place and the other at Micanopy, so you see I had to go 18 or 20 miles for budwood. There were two brothers who were surgeons in the U. S. army, and were with the army in the Indian wars of Florida, before the public lands were surveyed and plotted in the peninsula of the territory of Florida, named Dr. Charles and Dr. Bernard M. Byrne. They took note of wild orange groves in various parts of the territory and laid pre-emption claims on many of them, which would give them the first chance to purchase same from the government when the land came into market. The tract that I bought was entered by the Byrnes. That is why it was called the Byrne grove. Dr. B. M. Byrne wrote several articles for publication about the wild orange tracts and their great value if converted into sweet fruit. Dr. R. J. Steele of North Carolina had a plantation (as all large farms were called), adjoining the Byrne tract on the south, and he was anxious to buy the Byrne tract to grow Sea Island cotton. He had a standing offer of $20 an acre for the Byrne land, but the Byrnes wanted a much higher price and kept it until about 1869, when they sold it for $4 an acre to Mr. William Porter of Brighton, near Boston, Mass., and I bought it from Mr. Porter in 1871 for $10 an acre. The Rev. P. P. Bishop of Auburn, N. Y., whose health had failed, was sent to Florida by the Baptist church as a missionary minister and settled on the St. Johns river, a few miles above Palatka,
where he laid out a town site and called it San Mateo. He preached in four towns in Florida, giving each town one Sunday in the month, viz.: Jacksonville, Palatka, Ocala, and (I think) Leesburg. It may seem queer to some people that the Baptist congregations in the above cities could not afford to pay a few hundred dollars a year for a minister to fill their pulpits, but such was the case. Mr. Bishop was a very able and learned pulpit orator, but with all his knowledge and great ability many persons called him the crazy orange preacher, because he talked so much about orange growing, and claimed it would be the coming industry of Florida. He had great faith in the value of the wild orange groves of the State. And he and some friends from his old home in New York bought such a tract on the Oklawaha river, near Leesburg, now known as Orange Bend, and was improving it at the time I purchased the Byrne tract, and the next time he came to preach in Ocala he heard of my venture and asked me on what terms he could get an interest in the property, either as a partner, or a separate interest for a part of it. I will state that this tract consisted of two fractional sections, one of two hundred acres and the other three hundred acres. I made him a price of $6,000 for the two hundred acre section. He accepted my proposition without going to see the property and got Hon. J. S. Adams of Jacksonville interested with him, but Mr. Adams failed to comply with his contract and withdrew, but the next winter Mr. Bishop's brother, Judge Bishop, of Cleveland, Ohio, was visiting Florida, and he agreed to join his brother in the venture. They went to Jacksonville and met Mr. James M. Hoyt, of Cleveland, and they mentioned their venture to him, and he asked them to let him join them in the venture, and they formed a co-partnership under the firm name of Bishop, Hoyt & Co. Judge Bishop and Dr. Hoyt were each to put in $1,500 a year for three years as a working capital against Mr. Bishop's time, who was to superintend the converting of the wild orange grove into a sweet orange property. Mr. Bishop guaranteed that after three years the proposition would be self-sustaining, but on Thanksgiving day of the third year, which was 1876, we had a hard freeze that froze the fruit on the trees, and Mr. Bishop had not shipped any of the fruit and all of it was spoiled, and for awhile it looked like Mr. Bishop was up against it in order to make good his guarantee, but luckily some parties from Dayton, Ohio, purchased a tract of land nearby and paid Mr. Bishop $3,000 for budded orange trees to transplant upon their land, and he made his guarantee good. I had not gathered any of my fruit and all of it was frozen. During that year I cleared sixty acres more of my land and budded the orange trees. These buds had grown from one to three feet, and about all of them on this sixty acres were killed, and had to be rebudded. Things looked blue for "James A." The Dayton parties were the Barneys and Stephens, who are large car builders in Dayton. They called their grove the Clifford orange grove.

Mr. James A. Owens, living some six miles south of us, had some large sweet
seedling orange trees which he thought were growing too close together, and he concluded to take out every other tree, and transplant them on other land. He sold the tops of ten of these trees to Mr. Bishop for budwood. One of these trees bore fruit that the Owens family claimed had a distinct "pineapple" flavor, and thus the pineapple variety of orange was introduced, and I firmly believe, to take it all in all, it is the best variety of orange that is grown. And if I were making a grove in Florida of, we will say, forty acres I would plant at least twenty acres in the pineapple variety of orange, five acres in the Parson Brown variety, two and a half acres in the tangerine, two and a half acres in the Temple orange, five acres in the Valencia late, and the balance of the forty in grapefruit.

Judge Means, living in the northern part of the county, about three miles south of Micanopy, was the first person to tackle the proposition of converting one of the wild orange groves, on Orange Lake, into a sweet orange grove property. He made a contract with the Presley heirs to improve their property on shares, I think on a 50-50 basis, and some years after Mr. Dupuy, Capt. Keep and Mr. Sampson and brother, large sugar planters in Louisiana, became disgusted by being drowned out so often by the overflow of the Mississippi, came to Florida and bought the interest of the Presley heirs, and thus was added four splendid families to the population of Marion County.

About 1869 Capt. John O. Mathews came to Ocala from Barre, Mass., and he was not there long before he came down "very sick" with the orange fever, for he, like Mr. Bishop, saw great possibilities in the orange industry, especially in wild orange groves, and he bought the Cowle property and began to transplant it into a sweet orange grove. This is the next wild orange property lying west from the Byrne tract. Later he sold half of his property to parties from Steubenville, Ohio, and Indiana, Pa., and with them came other parties who bought land in the near vicinity, and thus we had added to our population such excellent people as Mr. Lindsay, Mr. A. S. Kells and his brother, Dr. Kells (a dentist), the Borland brothers, Mr. David Barcus and two young men by the name of Ball and Maxwell, from Steubenville. And about that time Mr. H. B. Stevens from Dayton, Ohio, became interested with Bishop, Hoyt & Co., and for years was the manager of that property under Mr. Bishop. His father was interested in the Clifford Company's property, and came out to be the manager of that property. About 1876, Prof. H. L. Wartmann and family (wife and five children), the two Douglass brothers and their families, all from West Virginia, cast their lot with us. Prof. Wartmann was the father of your Mr. E. L. Wartmann, who was then a mere boy, and grew into manhood among us. Wages for common labor were very low. I feel ashamed to state the amount, but will state that the orange growers paid higher wages than were paid throughout that part of the State, and we got the best men for 75 cents and $1.00 per day; boys and women were paid less. I wanted my laborers to have plenty to
eat, and knew that many of them would not get it if they fed themselves, so I hired a woman to do the cooking and paid my men 75 cents a day and fed them. I always grew a lot of vegetables and sweet potatoes and all my men had plenty to eat and gave me a good day's work, and I will state that we had no eight or ten hours a day, but in the summer time they worked ten and twelve hours a day, and in winter they worked as long as daylight would allow. We worked mostly negro labor, but used some white labor; the latter generally fed themselves. I will state that Ed. Wartmann was not too proud to work, and took his dinner pail and sought work in the orange groves, either with me or Bishop, Hoyt & Co., at the prevailing wages, and gave us good, honest, faithful work, and thus he grew to manhood among us, honored and beloved by everybody, and is a citizen that any community would rejoice to have.

About 1872 my cousin, Mr. John T. Harris, came to Ocala on a visit to his uncle (my father), and after seeing the groves at Orange Lake concluded it was good enough for him, and I employed him as foreman. He and Mr. L. S. Brooks of Maynard, Mass., made a grove in the hammock about a mile south of my grove. Other parties purchased land in the hammock adjoining the Harris and Brooks grove and planted budded trees on their land. I can't recall their names now, except Mr. Lipsey. John T. Harris had a young wife and one child when he came. The child was a bright, lovely boy about two years old, and was the pet of everyone who knew him, especially in Ocala. John had four other children, all boys, by his first wife, who grew to manhood in Citra, and I think all four of them entered railroading, and all hold good, lucrative positions with railroads, either in Georgia or Florida. He lost his wife and afterwards married a widow Smith, by whom he had one child, also a boy, who is a lawyer in Atlanta, Ga. Messrs. Wychoff and Heastman were tramping through the country, and took up at Iola on the Oklawaha river, and Mrs. E. A. White advised them to go to the orange groves on Orange Lake, and as things looked good to them they stopped, and made good citizens.

For several years after Mr. Bishop became interested in the orange grove business on Orange Lake, he continued to live at San Mateo, on the St. Johns river, a few miles above Palatka, but finally built a lovely home at Citra, and became a full fledged citizen.

Mrs. E. A. White abandoned her old homestead on the Oklawaha river and with her family moved to near the big orange groves, and later came her brother-in-law, Mr. Adam White, and family.

The Peninsular Railroad was finally built from Waldo south to the south side of the groves on Orange Lake, and halted there for awhile, when it was built to Ocala. Up to then we had no name for our settlement, but after we had the railroad we finally settled on the name of Citra, which is taken from citrus fruits, and until we had the railroad the mail for the settlement came to Ocala, eighteen miles to the south, from Gaines-
ville, by stage three times a week. The Ocala postmaster had a big box in which he put all the mail for our settlement, and anyone going from our settlement to Ocala would take and bring the mail for the whole community, and anyone coming out from Ocala would bring the mail; we generally got the mail once or twice a week. We had no use for daily papers.

Mrs. E. A. White was the mother of C. W. White of Citra and New York, and who became very largely interested in orange growing and phosphate mining in Florida.

Mr. John F. Dunn bought about 30 acres from me off the west side of my tract, and he interested his brother, Henry, with him, and the latter made the Dunn grove. Mr. Dunn afterwards bought the George I. F. Clark tract of about a thousand acres. This was what is known as a Spanish grant. This tract was part hammock and part pine, and lay adjoining the land he bought from me to the west. He had this land surveyed, plotted into 20-acre lots, most of which he sold to parties who improved them with orange groves. Mr. Dunn had two other brothers to come to Citra, Mr. Harley B. Dunn and Mr. Weston Dunn, and both made orange groves. Mr. Wilkinson and family came from West Virginia. His two daughters married the two Borland brothers. Mr. John Church of Boston bought a 40-acre grove from me. He interested his brother and Mr. Chipman, one from Nova Scotia and the other from New Brunswick, Canada. They also bought adjoining land and enlarged their groves. After selling to Mr. Church I had thirty acres between his purchase and the Dunn purchase. Miss Osgood came to Florida for the winter and soon came down with the "orange fever," as it was called. Mr. Burnsides, a newspaper man in Jacksonville, told her to go to Ocala, see Jim Harris and do whatever he said. The result was she bought the 30-acre lot from me. This left me 200 acres, which was the cream of the whole 500 acres I originally purchased from Mr. Porter. But all of the 500 acres was good. Some of the Bishop purchase had more orange trees to the acre than any part of my 200 acres. Miss Osgood's purchase got into the newspapers, so it happened that a Mr. Allen was in Florida for the winter and saw the notice of Miss Osgood's venture, and he thought she must be an old sweetheart, and he went chasing her from place to place until he found her, and she proved to be his old "flame," and she became Mrs. Allen. Miss Osgood's sister, Mrs. Brown, came out from Jacksonville, Ill., and became interested with her sister in the grove which was known as the Brown and Allen grove, but it was afterwards merged with the Church grove and the Borland brothers' grove, and was called the Citra Orange Grove Company, and they are large shippers of citrus fruits.

Mr. George Coulson of Boston, Mr. Calvin Choat of Massachusetts, General French of the United States army, Mr. Harvey Robinson, of Ocala, and a number of others whose names I can't just now recall, bought land from Mr. Dunn out of his George I. F. Clark
grant, and made orange groves. Mr. Lindsay and the Kells brothers, all from Steubenville, Ohio, and a Mr. Stewart, from Indiana, Pa., bought the west half of the Cowle tract from Capt. J. O. Mathews.

For a number of years after I commenced making the grove we had no railroad, and all freight, both incoming and outgoing, was handled by team to Iola on the Oklawaha river, twelve miles away, and then by steamboat to Palatka and Jacksonville. When the Peninsular Railroad was built from Waldo, it ran on the dividing line between my grove and that of Bishop, Hoyt & Co., for about three fourths of a mile. We had to take up hundreds of orange trees to allow the road to get through. This road is now part of the S. A. L. Then afterwards came the Florida Southern, now a part of the A. C. L. This road ran along the south side of my grove. Thus we had splendid transportation to our very door. Bishop Hoyt & Co.'s packing house was on the east side of the railroad and mine on the west. Each of us had our own siding and also a track out to the Florida Southern, where we had our own siding, and then we had a postoffice, two depots, two churches for the whites and two for the colored, and a school for white children, and also one for colored children, and we were a happy, prosperous community. And if Citra only had a warmer climate I would rather drive my pins there than in any other place in Florida, for it certainly has an ideal soil for citrus fruits. If we could only raise the whole of Citra and the groves 75 or 100 feet it would have the climate, for high altitude is the best protection against frost that can be had. I consider high altitude a better protection against freezing weather than water, unless it is a large deep body of clear water, and then you want to be on the southeast or east of the water. That part of Orange Lake north and west of the groves at Citra is shallow and grassy, and does not give you much, if any, protection against frost. The altitude of the groves at Citra is about 40 feet. I know of a high hill having nearly 350 feet altitude, which is located in a large body of hammock land. The soil is very similar to the soil of the groves at Citra, being a rich, alluvial hammock soil. I think I could get about 300 acres on top of the hill, and I believe it is the best undeveloped grove proposition in the State, and I wish I could tackle it, for in five years I would have the best grove in the State. I know the different sections of the peninsular part of the State, and I believe I know the soil best adapted to growing good healthy orange trees, and I unhesitatingly say the soil of this hill is all right for the orange and kindred fruits and the altitude gives protection against frost.

Messrs. Dickenson and Alker, two lawyers of New York City, bought a tract of hammock land located a few miles west from Citra, and transformed it into an orange grove. They sent a Frenchman, named Taniet, to superintend the making of their grove. Mr. Taniet had a widowed daughter. He built a hotel in Citra. Dr. C. C. Harris was a citizen of Citra, but afterwards
moved near Sparr. There were a number of others who settled among us who will pardon me for not mentioning them by name, but without any exception all made good citizens.

Col. Stewart, from Louisiana, a friend of Capt. Keep, bought the Paul McCormick tract, and also the club house wild orange grove, which he converted into a sweet orange property. This part of Orange Lake was known by the beautiful name of Lochbie, but when the railroad came the name of Lochbie was changed to Orange Lake.

Many people settled in and near McIntosh, where there were a number of fine grove properties. This is about two miles north from Lochbie, and about two miles further north is Boardman, where Capt. Keep, Mr. Dupuy and the Sampson brothers lived. A number of other persons settled there until they had a nice little town. Then across the lake on Island Grove, the Widow Blake, Major George R. Fairbanks, Mr. Ader Clark and others had fine orange properties. Mr. D. L. Yulee had an orange grove on the east side of Lochloosa.

I think I have covered all the Orange Lake territory, but before I close I want to tell you how I first met Mr. Kendig. I think it was in the spring of 1885 that Mr. and Mrs. Kendig and another married couple whose name I forgot, were "doing" Florida, and were on the train going north that crossed the Florida Southern railroad at Hawthorne, some 12 or 15 miles north of Citra. From Hawthorne the Florida Southern went to Palatka, on the St. Johns river. The Peninsular Railroad (now part of the S. A. L.), was due to cross the other road a few minutes before the train on the other road got to this crossing, but made no connection, and if any passengers were on board, when the train slowed down for the crossing they hurriedly got out and ran for the train on the other road. Now, it so happened that my New York agent, who had an orange grove on the St. Johns river, above Palatka, was to see me and he wanted me to go with him and see his grove and give him some advice as to how he should treat it, and we were to take the train as it passed my packing house, and change to the other road at Hawthorne crossing. Now, it also happened that the freight train that morning was loaded to capacity and could not take two carloads (700 boxes) of fruit from my siding that was billed to go on the O. S. S. Co.'s ship sailing from Savannah the next day and if it missed that ship the fruit would lay in Savannah two days for the next ship. To show you how nicely the railroads in those days treated their patrons, without me asking for it, the general manager of the railroad wired the conductor on the passenger train to take on two cars of fruit from the Harris siding that was billed to go on the O. S. S. Co.'s ship sailing from Savannah the next day and if it missed that ship the fruit would lay in Savannah two days for the next ship. To show you how nicely the railroads in those days treated their patrons, without me asking for it, the general manager of the railroad wired the conductor on the passenger train to take on two cars of fruit from the Harris siding. It only took a few minutes to do this, but these few minutes made us miss the connection at the Hawthorne crossing. As we got to the crossing, the train on the other road was pulling out for Palatka, and while they had no special connection to make at Palatka they would not wait a minute for us, and the six of us had to wait for the next train, which we were told
would be about five o'clock that afternoon. It was then about eleven o'clock. There were hotel runners for the two hotels in Hawthorne to meet the train. One of the hotels was called the Pennsylvania Hotel. The Kendig party said they would go to the Pennsylvania. I said to my friend that we had better go to that hotel too, and maybe we would get a better dinner for six than for two, but if we did I feel sorry for the patrons of the other hotel. I don't think the Kendig party felt very nicely toward me for from what I could understand they thought it an outrage to stop a passenger train to take on cars of fruit to accommodate a fruit grower. At near five that afternoon we gathered at the depot of the Florida Southern, but had to wait there till eleven o'clock that night before the train arrived, and the agent could not give us any information as to the delay. It seems a car in the train had broken an axle between stations, and the conductor could not wire what was the cause of the delay, and had to send back to the next station before he could get his car repaired; and all that time we waited. Mrs. Kendig asked me to join her and her friends in a game of whist to pass away the time. Mr. Kendig and my friend put in the time promenading on the depot platform, and when they understood the reason for the railroad taking on my fruit they thought it was very nice for the railroad to do it. I thought nothing more about the incident and did not even remember the names of the parties until the next winter when we had a hard freeze that froze the fruit and injured some orange trees. Mr. Kendig wrote me and said he thought after this freeze that maybe it was a good time to buy an orange property in Florida, and asked if I knew of any such properties that could be had at a fair price, and also asked if I had any such property that I would sell. I wrote about several properties and advised him to look at properties in other parts of the State. It so happened that I had a property east of Sparr that I wrote him I would sell at just what I had paid for it the summer before, and the cost of the work I had done on it with the interest. I told him just why I had bought it; that the owner was a friend of mine with a sick wife whom he wanted to take to Atlanta to be treated by a specialist, and I bought his grove so he could take his wife to the specialist. Mr. Kendig came out. I showed him the grove and he was so well pleased with it that he said he would take it, and would not look any further at other properties; and I will say this that I don't know of any nicer man living than Mr. Kendig, and there is no man whose friendship and good opinion I value more than his. And Marion County is to be congratulated to have such a good man interested in a Marion County orange grove property.

Committee on History,

Paper No. II.