

were filled, was like that of other habitable keys near the Florida Reef, having a high ridge extending along its water front, on the ocean or gulf side, where the deepest water lies, and sloping back to ponds and lagoons, beyond which lie high hammock lands. The early settlers naturally selected the high ridge on the deep-water side to build the city, and until the onward march of commercial progress and the development as a naval station drove them further back, the finest residences were built on and near the water front, from the present location of the United States Marine Hospital to the foot of Duval street. Back of the high ridge on the southwestern end of the island was a large lagoon which commenced in a swamp not very far from the southwestern end of the island and continuing along, nearly parallel with the beach, crossed Whitehead street near Caroline, and entered the water near the north end of Simonton street. Where it crossed Whitehead street it was so narrow that it was easily bridged for carts and carriages by a few planks. After crossing this street, it spread out into what was called a pond, which in 1836 covered about two acres of ground. Duval street then crossed this pond in about its center. The depth of water varied with the ebb and flow of the tide, but it was generally about twelve to eighteen inches deep. A foot bridge, made of piles and covered with planks, commenced within about 100 feet of the corner of Duval and Front streets, and extended to within about 75 feet of the corner of Duval and Caroline streets. A more substantial bridge about fifteen feet long afforded a passage across the entrance of the pond, about on a line with Simonton street, which was used by drays and other vehicles; it being the only way to get to and from the northwestern part of the island. There was also a small bridge across Whitehead street, which in 1850 was superseded by a wagon road.

No attempt was made to get rid of the lagoon or pond because it was apprehended that if it should be closed to the flux and influx of the tides, other portions of the inhabited city would be subject to overflow, and to guard against this the charter of 1836 not only restricted the authorities of the city from filling up the streets, but the owners of lots covered by the pond were also restrained from filling them.

The hurricane of 1846 so altered the configuration of the island by washing up the sand, that the pond ceased to receive the tides, and the consequences apprehended not having occurred, the restriction against such filling was omitted from subsequent charters, and in November, 1853, an ordinance was passed requiring the respective owners of the submerged lots to fill them up.

These lots were in the hands of various owners, some of whom complied with the terms of the ordinance, others suffered the work to be done by the city, and paid the costs of the filling, whilst others refused to fill in or pay the expense incurred therefor.

The city Whitehead in pretentious of extending sou On the 8th of lution giving to cut and re caused it to b As late as with its orig etc., but in burned off on head and Eliz

The first Whitehead st way between only house o was one belo house is still built in the 1835, 1846, 18

A large party of fif this purpose sloop Concor Coffin, instru leading towns B. Browne, assisted in the from the Sem the mainland attempt an a

The follo many years U ing reading o

"About first landed t which sailed not very far forty-five yea had been app a good lawy He resigned was appointe had not then Star. Mr. Al Thomas East story of the r was calling i know the sou



were filled, was like that of other habitable keys near the Florida Reef, having a high ridge extending along its water front, on the ocean or gulf side, where the deepest water lies, and sloping back to ponds and lagoons, beyond which lie high hammock lands. The early settlers naturally selected the high ridge on the deep-water side to build the city, and until the onward march of commercial progress and the development as a naval station drove them further back, the finest residences were built on and near the water front, from the present location of the United States Marine Hospital to the foot of Duval street. Back of the high ridge on the southwestern end of the island was a large lagoon which commenced in a swamp not very far from the southwestern end of the island and continuing along, nearly parallel with the beach, crossed Whitehead street near Caroline, and entered the water near the north end of Simonton street. Where it crossed Whitehead street it was so narrow that it was easily bridged for carts and carriages by a few planks. After crossing this street, it spread out into what was called a pond, which in 1836 covered about two acres of ground. Duval street then crossed this pond in about its center. The depth of water varied with the ebb and flow of the tide, but it was generally about twelve to eighteen inches deep. A foot bridge, made of piles and covered with planks, commenced within about 100 feet of the corner of Duval and Front streets, and extended to within about 75 feet of the corner of Duval and Caroline streets. A more substantial bridge about fifteen feet long afforded a passage across the entrance of the pond, about on a line with Simonton street, which was used by drays and other vehicles; it being the only way to get to and from the northwestern part of the island. There was also a small bridge across Whitehead street, which in 1850 was superseded by a wagon road.

No attempt was made to get rid of the lagoon or pond because it was apprehended that if it should be closed to the flux and influx of the tides, other portions of the inhabited city would be subject to overflow, and to guard against this the charter of 1836 not only restricted the authorities of the city from filling up the streets, but the owners of lots covered by the pond were also restrained from filling them.

The hurricane of 1846 so altered the configuration of the island by washing up the sand, that the pond ceased to receive the tides, and the consequences apprehended not having occurred, the restriction against such filling was omitted from subsequent charters, and in November, 1853, an ordinance was passed requiring the respective owners of the submerged lots to fill them up.

These lots were in the hands of various owners, some of whom complied with the terms of the ordinance, others suffered the work to be done by the city, and paid the costs of the filling, whilst others refused to fill in or pay the expense incurred thereby.

The city  
Whitehead in  
pretentious o  
extending sou  
On the 8th o  
lution giving  
to cut and re  
caused it to b  
As late as  
with its orig  
etc., but in  
burned off on  
head and Eliz

The first  
Whitehead st  
way between  
only house o  
was one belo  
house is still  
built in the  
1835, 1846, 18

A large p  
a party of fif  
this purpose  
sloop Concor  
Coffin, instru  
leading towns  
B. Browne,  
assisted in th  
from the Sem  
the mainland  
attempt an a

The follo  
many years U  
ing reading o

"About  
first landed t  
which sailed  
not very far  
forty-five yea  
had been app  
a good lawy  
He resigned  
was appointe  
had not then  
Star. Mr. A

The city was surveyed and mapped by Mr. William A. Whitehead in February, 1829, and like all new cities was more pretentious on the map than in reality. None of the streets extending southeasterly were cleared beyond Caroline street. On the 8th of October, 1831, the city council adopted a resolution giving free commission to the inhabitants of the town to cut and remove the woods standing on Eaton street, which caused it to be cleared of trees from Duval to Simonton streets. As late as 1837 Eaton street beyond Simonton was covered with its original small trees, heavy underbrush, vines, cacti, etc., but in that year the woods were cleared and the brush burned off on all that part of the island lying between Whitehead and Elizabeth streets, as far out as Fleming street.

The first street opened through to the South Beach was Whitehead street. Duval street was only cleared about half way between Eaton and Fleming street as late as 1836, and the only house on it at that time, after crossing Caroline street, was one belonging to Captain Francis B. Watlington. This house is still occupied by his immediate family, and though built in the early thirties, weathered the great hurricanes of 1835, 1846, 1909 and 1910, and sustained little damage.

A large part of this work was accomplished in one day by a party of fifty or more United States sailors sent on shore for this purpose by the commanding officers of the United States sloop Concord, and other vessels then lying in the harbor. Prof. Coffin, instructor in mathematics to the midshipmen, and leading townspeople, among whom were Judge Marvin, Mr. Jos. B. Browne, Mr. Stephen R. Mallory and Mr. Asa F. Tift, assisted in the work, which was done with a view to take away from the Seminole Indians, who were at war with the whites on the mainland, the means of concealing themselves, should they attempt an attack on the town.

The following from the pen of Judge William Marvin, for many years United States district judge at Key West, is interesting reading of the old days:

"About the persons I found living in Key West when I first landed there in October, 1836, from a little mail schooner, which sailed from Charleston (the whole population was then not very far from four hundred souls), James Webb, then about forty-five years old, was the judge of the Superior Court. He had been appointed by President Adams from Georgia. He was a good lawyer, an impartial judge and a genial gentleman. He resigned his office in 1839 and moved to Texas, where he was appointed by President Lamar, secretary of State. Texas had not then been admitted into the Union—it was the Lone Star. Mr. Alden A. M. Jackson was clerk of the court and Mr. Thomas Easton was marshal. They told in that day a good story of the marshal. He had been only recently appointed. He was calling in the court the names of the jurors. He did not know the sound of a single letter in Spanish. He had come from



The city was surveyed and mapped by Mr. William A. Whitehead in February, 1829, and like all new cities was more pretentious on the map than in reality. None of the streets extending southeasterly were cleared beyond Caroline street. On the 8th of October, 1831, the city council adopted a resolution giving free commission to the inhabitants of the town to cut and remove the woods standing on Eaton street, which caused it to be cleared of trees from Duval to Simonton streets. As late as 1837 Eaton street beyond Simonton was covered with its original small trees, heavy underbrush, vines, cacti, etc., but in that year the woods were cleared and the brush burned off on all that part of the island lying between Whitehead and Elizabeth streets, as far out as Fleming street.

The first street opened through to the South Beach was Whitehead street. Duval street was only cleared about half way between Eaton and Fleming street as late as 1836, and the only house on it at that time, after crossing Caroline street, was one belonging to Captain Francis B. Watlington. This house is still occupied by his immediate family, and though built in the early thirties, weathered the great hurricanes of 1835, 1846, 1909 and 1910, and sustained little damage.

A large part of this work was accomplished in one day by a party of fifty or more United States sailors sent on shore for this purpose by the commanding officers of the United States sloop Concord, and other vessels then lying in the harbor. Prof. Coffin, instructor in mathematics to the midshipmen, and leading townspeople, among whom were Judge Marvin, Mr. Jos. B. Browne, Mr. Stephen R. Mallory and Mr. Asa F. Tift, assisted in the work, which was done with a view to take away from the Seminole Indians, who were at war with the whites on the mainland, the means of concealing themselves, should they attempt an attack on the town.

The following from the pen of Judge William Marvin, for many years United States district judge at Key West, is interesting reading of the old days:

"About the persons I found living in Key West when I first landed there in October, 1836, from a little mail schooner, which sailed from Charleston (the whole population was then not very far from four hundred souls), James Webb, then about forty-five years old, was the judge of the Superior Court. He had been appointed by President Adams from Georgia. He was a good lawyer, an impartial judge and a genial gentleman. He resigned his office in 1839 and moved to Texas, where he was appointed by President Lamar, secretary of State. Texas had not then been admitted into the Union—it was the Lone Star. Mr. Alden A. M. Jackson was clerk of the court and Mr. Thomas Easton was marshal. They told in that day a good story of the marshal. He had been only recently appointed. He was calling in the court the names of the jurors. He did not know the sound of a single letter in Spanish. He had come from