

"A former public character, Senator Matthew Quay, was a guest at the shack where he annually also came to fish. To Senator Quay we owe a great deal for the development of the modern tarpon fishing reel.

"To reach Naples - a very uncertain journey - one secured any sort of craft possible. Sometimes they cleared the bar at Gordon's Pass - most frequently they did not.

"Subsequently, when Fort Myers was again placed on the map, having existed and been abandoned from one to three times; the 'Alice Howard', a small steamer, was put on from Punta Gorda through Charlotte Harbor and its islands, stopping at St. James City, which was established as a winter resort with a hotel and dock, to Punta Rassa.

"The Naples Hotel was started of logs (the central part of the present hotel). The store was of logs, also. The guide boats were only row boats and out-rigged small sail boats.

"There was one family living in Naples who had come there in February, 1883. One of three brothers, his name was Madisen Weeks. His wife was a full blooded Indian. He made his house on the summit of the shell mound near Gordon's Pass. His worldly possessions beside his wife, children and some bedding, consisted when he arrived of a row boat, a cast net, some tobacco and pumpkin seed. He made the statement that that was all a man needed here. They lived off of fish, venison, bananas, oysters and clams. Their sons were the guides for the sportsmen who came. They would row home-built boats all day, trolling to and from Gordon's Pass by means of oars, for \$1.00 per day.

"The first house built in Naples was a little house that stands now where the King place is. It was moved and afterwards used as a post office. The first residence built in Naples was the one now occupied and owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Halderman. It was the home of General Williams, the founder of Naples, and his daughter, Mrs. James H. Holloway. The second house was the place known as the Rose Cleveland place. She was a sister of President Grover Cleveland. The second residence was the one now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Espenhain. The third, known as the Henry Watterson Cottage, recently acquired by Mr. George M. Hendry.

"For amusement, of course, fishing and hunting were indulged in. On Sunday afternoons all gathered in the parlor of the hotel; sang songs and gave a program consisting of religious or other talks and recitations.

"It was then that the Cottagers Association was organized - the spring of 1889. It was suggested by Mr. Walter N. Halderman and he was its first president. There were 19 members. A constitution was drawn up and by-laws written.

"Mrs. Bruce Halderman has the first hotel register - showing names of various celebrities.

"The wife of the Duke of Windsor was here when the railroad was formally opened and the celebration held."

5. From reference CCXXXV(a), (Ms letter 1946.)

"August 31, 1946
Key West, Florida.

"Hon. D. Graham Copeland, Chairman,
Board of County Commissioners, Collier County
Everglades, Florida.

Dear Mr. Copeland:

"On my return from Miami a couple of days ago, where I have been undergoing hospital treatment for the past two weeks, I find your letter of the 26th instant enclosing a letter to Mrs. Jefferson B. Browne. I have a vague recollection of the contents of this letter. You are in error though about Jefferson Browne being a blood relative of a Mr. Allen, who lived at Chokoloskee in your county. Mr. George W. Allen, our most prominent citizen up to the time of his death in 1922 and who was President of The First National Bank of Key West and my partner in other business activities, is the son of the Collier County Allen whom you refer to as William Allen. Dwight Allen of West Palm Beach is also a son. I don't know whether Dwight Allen is still living. Jefferson B. Browne is no blood kin whatsoever of the Allens. George W. Allen married Jefferson B. Browne's sister. As far as I know, all of the members of the Allen family have long since passed on. Sorry I cannot give you more detailed information.

"Thank you for your good wishes in the concluding paragraph of your letter. I have retired now from all business activities, sold my controlling interest in The First National Bank several years ago to the duPont interests and my waterfront properties and shipping business to the Gulf Oil Corporation, and now about concluding the sale of my extensive realty interests, and when this transaction is consummated, I will have about concluded all of my affairs. Unfortunately, I had a red light signal about eight weeks ago, a slight stroke, which made me temporarily lose the use of my right foot and leg, but now it is about normal again and I am doing fine except the doctor says from now on I must take everything easy and not attempt to do any further business.

"With kindest personal regards and trusting this finds you in excellent health and spirits, I am

Sincerely,

"WRP:eg

(Signed) Wm. R. Porter."

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HISTORY OF
CHOCOLUSKEE OR EVERGLADES

by

Dwight A. Allen
419 Gardenia Street
West Palm Beach, Florida

The first Allen to settle in south Florida was Geo. Dwight Allen, who had been U.S. Consul in Havana, Cuba, and lived in Key West in 1860. He was then U.S. Marshal and owned a drugstore in Key West.

William Smith Allen, brother of Geo. D. Allen, was then (1860) living in Jacksonville, Fla., with his wife and three small sons-- Geo. W., John William and Dwight A. Wm. S. Allen was a bookkeeper for Fairbanks Co., a large saw-mill lumber company in Jacksonville. When the Civil War started in 1861, Wm. S. Allen being a "godamyankee", he was compelled to leave his family in Jacksonville and flee. He joined his brother Geo. D. in Key West and later became deputy U.S. Marshall there. About the year 1866, the Allen Brothers built the largest store building in Key West at the southeast corner of Duval and Front Sts. The Allen Brothers were Wm. S., Geo. D., M.A., and B.W. The store was of general merchandise. Geo. D. Allen still owned his drugstore. A dearth of castor oil, about the year 1868, induced Geo. D. and Wm. S. to think of raising castor oil beans (which grow wild in some parts of Florida) as a business. Wm. S. Allen bought a schooner, and loading it with farming equipment and workmen, went to Sanibel Island off the west coast of Florida at Punta Rassa, and started to raising castor beans. Mr. Allen learned that while castor beans grew wild, when cultivated they did not do so well; and when a hurricane, in 1870, ruined his castor bean venture, he loaded his farming equipment on the schooner and headed for Key West. When he arrived off Pavillian Key he needed water, and ran the schooner into Chocoloskee Bay. Mr. Allen found John Weeks living at the mouth of the creek, on the east side, with his step-daughter, Lizzy, and daughter Apilona and Sarah Jane. Mr. Week's wife had died some years before. Mr. Allen went to Key West but soon returned (in 1870) and settled on the land where Everglades now stands. Geo. W. Allen, son of Wm. S. had come from Ithaca, New York where he was at school, and was now living at Chocoluskee with his father. Willie Allen and Dwight Allen came to join their father from Ithaca in 1871.

Soon after Wm. S. Allen settled in Chocohuskee in 1870, a Capt. Jacobs settled on the left hand side of the creek about a quarter mile above the Allen place. After Jacobs died (he was a retired sea captain) Mr. Allen acquired the Jacobs Place and in later years gave the property to Bembery Storter. The creek upon which Mr. Allen lived was known for many years as Allen Creek, and was so named upon old maps of Florida. Across the creek from the Allen home, a relative of John Weeks, named Alex Messer, settled in 1871. Later, Mr. Allen acquired the Messer Place. Mr. Allen went to Peace Creek in 1871 in his schooner the "Jennie" and brought to Chocohuskee a colored man, Richard Hamilton, to work for him. Hamilton had a wife (supposed to be a white woman) and two small boys, Tommy and Willie.

Capt. Dick Turner settled on a creek three miles south of Allen's place about 1874. The island at the mouth of Turner's Creek, then called Big Island, showed signs of having been inhabited by an unknown settler many years before because large bearing lime trees were growing on the island. Later, Mr. Weeks moved to Big Island, about 1873 or 1874. About 1875 a Mr. Jenkins and family settled on Big Island. Mrs. Jenkins had two small children and two boys and a daughter by a former husband named Daniels. The boys were James and John Henry Daniels. The daughter married Adolphus Santini, who with his brother Nicholas settled on Big Island about this time.

When Wm. S. Allen settled at Chocoluskee in 1870, there were only two other settlements along the southwestern coast of Florida between Punta Rassa and Cape Sable. A man named Collier and family at Marco; and an unknown settler at Cape Sable. The settler at Cape Sable might have been a Mr. Clay. The writer does not remember any settler named Clay as having ever lived at Chocoluskee.

For reference CCXXXV(c) (Mo. letter 1887)

LETTER FROM MR. WM. S. ALLEN TO DWIGHT A. ALLEN, ASSISTANT
AT JUPITER LIGHT

"Chocoluskee, March 21st, 1887 - Dear Son:- Our boat had a terrible passage and was gone 17 days. I began to write to you in Feby - but the boat hurried off so that I could not finish my letter till March. Then there was no boat to carry the letter - so last Friday my wife and I went to the Island and found out that Nicholas Santini would leave sometime this week and I left our letter for him to carry to Key West. None the letters are there so far from us the boat came in and brought a picture from you. It is a beautiful picture and quite natural. I was there when Old Dave Stone had a house and Bananas back of a shell mound near you. That was in October 1855 when George was one year old. I was there again in 1863 and was captured very near the spot where you stand in the picture. The officer had been watching us from the lantern of the Light House and captured us as soon as we got ashore and carried us prisoners to Key West. This was when you were 3 years old and boarding with your mother in Michigan.

"Thank you for the picture. Two New Yorkers were here the day it arrived and admired it very much. They are young men, bird hunters, and buy all the plumes they can get hold of. They are regular green Northerners - had never seen bananas or guavas growing and had no idea how they looked except in the fruit stores. George sent me a birthday present of a check for Ten Dollars. God bless him! He was always willing to help me. I think all my sons are doing well and are an honor to their parentage.

"Write soon and believe me as ever - Your affectionate father,
Wm. S. Allen."

From reference CCXXXV(d), (Ms. letter 1923)

LETTER FROM MRS. RUBY STORTER ALDERMAN TO
MR. D. A. ALLEN, PALM BEACH.

"Everglades, Fla., December 7, 1923. -

Mr. D. A. Allen, Palm Beach

Dear Mr. Allen:

Your nice letter rec'd and we certainly appreciate your kind intentions.

Our school has increased in size since your visit here last winter. We have forty-five pupils now and two teachers. I, myself, being principal.

We are planning a little Xmas tree for the school children on Friday before Xmas and your gifts will be a great surprise and delight to the children. I will take great pleasure in distributing them among them.

The best way to ship this box would be to Ft. Myers, Fla. c/o Steamer Everglades. We have no dependable boat between Everglades and Key West.

Again thanking you, I am

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) Ruby Storter Alderman
Everglades, Florida."

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9. From reference CGXXXV(e), (Ms. Interview 1947)

(a) NOTES ON EARLY DAYS IN COLLIER COUNTY, AS FURNISHED BY MR. DWIGHT ADAMS ALLEN AT 419 GARDENIA STREET, WEST PALM BEACH, FLA. AT AN INTERVIEW BY MR. NORMAN A. HERREN ON FEBRUARY 8 1947.

(b) The father of Mr. Dwight Adams Allen was William Smith Allen, who was the second or third known settler on the present site of Everglades, Fla. The first reported settler was William Clay, from whom Mr. Allen purchased his holdings at Everglades, and the second was Mr. John Weeks, who was living with his three daughters at the mouth of today's Barron's River on the present A. U. Rodney site.

William Smith Allen was born February 16, 1823, at Enfield, Connecticut, and married Mary Jane Sprague at Ithaca, New York, and died at Key West October 10, 1891.

Mary Jane Sprague was born in Lyons, New York, in 1826, and later moved to Ithaca, New York, where she met and married William Smith Allen. She died in July, 1869 at Ithaca, New York and is buried there.

Soon after their marriage, the Allens moved to Georgia, where William Smith Allen taught school and from which they moved to Jacksonville, Fla., where Mr. Allen was employed as a bookkeeper for the Fairbanks Company, a large sawmilling firm.

The offspring of this marriage were:

George Whiting Allen: Born in Jacksonville, Fla., September, 1854 and died in Key West, Fla., June 30, 1922,

John William Allen: Born in Homer, New York, in June, 1857 and died at Key West, Fla., in May, 1918,

Dwight Adams Allen: Born in Jacksonville, Fla., July 31, 1860, and now living at 419 Gardenia Street, West Palm Beach, Florida, and

A daughter who died young.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Allen family was living in Jacksonville and Mr. Allen, being termed a "Damyantee", was forced to flee and settled at Key West while his wife and three sons returned to Ithaca, New York.

George Dwight Allen, a brother of William S. Allen, was Collector of Customs at Key West and William S. Allen was appointed Deputy Collector of Customs. The two Allen brothers also owned a drugstore in Key West and, there being a shortage of castor oil, William S. Allen, having noted the profuse growth of castor beans wild in South Florida, proceeded to Sanibel Island for the purpose of planting and cultivating castor beans, accompanied by his oldest son, George Whiting, in 1868.

The castor bean venture having proved a failure, Mr. Allen and his son returned to Key West by schooner and, en route, put in at "Chocaluskee". This name was at that time applied to the entire region bordering on Chokoloskee Bay.

As recalled by Mr. Dwight Adams Allen, the only family residing in the present Everglades area at the time of his first visit here was that of John Weeks.

Mrs. Mary Jane Sprague Allen died in 1869 and, in 1870 Mr. William S. Allen settled in "Chocaluskee" on the site of the present Rod & Gun Club in Everglades. The home was built on the east bank of present-day Barron's River. In 1871 John William and Dwight Adams Allen joined their father at Everglades and, sometime later (187) their father married Helen Graham in Key West -- Mr. Allen having met her at Peace Creek. The second Mrs. Allen died, according to Mr. Dwight Adams Allen, between 1886 and 1890 in an asylum.

At the time of the Allens first visit to this area, Pavilion Key and Pelican Key bore those names. Pelican Key was the roosting place of hundreds of pelicans, to which fact was probably due the name assigned it.

Dwight Adams Allen -- then about 11 years old -- joined his father at Everglades, and George Whiting Allen left for Key West where he lived with and worked for his Uncle, George Dwight Allen. John William soon followed his brother to Key West and the two later went into business there.

As recalled by Mr. Dwight A. Allen, the only people living in the entire coastal area between Sanibel and Key West, at the time his father settled at Everglades, were the Collier brothers at Marco, John Weeks and 3 daughters on the west bank of Barron's River at its mouth, and a settler at Cape Sable whose name he does not recall.

While living here, Dwight Adams Allen and his father visited at the home of a widow named Whidden who lived at Hickory Bluff on the north bank of the mouth of Charlotte Harbor. Mrs. Whidden had a son named Ed with whom Dwight Adams hunted and fished.