

Mr. Allen stated that all did not go well between his stepmother and brothers, which may have accounted for his two older brothers moving to Key West as it was the ultimate cause of his removal from Everglades.

One day while swimming off the point at Everglades, Dwight turned over a skiff and lost a bailing bucket. On his return home, although he had righted the skiff but had failed to locate the bucket, he went to his father's workshop to change his wet clothes. His stepmother, having heard of the loss of the bucket, asked the father to punish the boy severely. His father entered the workshop while Dwight was changing his clothing and, seizing an axe handle, shouted at him: "Lose my bailer, will you!" and thereupon proceeded to chastise him about the body with the axe handle. According to Mr. Allen, this was the only time his father had ever acted in such manner and, feeling that conditions were not what they should be, he determined to run away.

Thereupon, he set out on foot with no provisions and only the clothing on his back and head north through the swamps. He travelled for 2 or 3 days with only the hearts of palmettos for sustenance and at night slept in the top of small palmetto palms, covered and protected by wide strong fronds. On his second day out, he sighted

smoke in the distance and, proceeding thither, finally arrived at an Indian village. Only squaws were in the village and he pushed on in a northerly direction. The next day he met an Indian man on the trail.

This Indian carried an umbrella, rifle and the skin of a freshly killed deer. The young boy made signs to indicate from whence he came and that he was hungry. This Indian, whom Mr. Allen later identified in Fort Myers as "Seminole Charlie" took the boy to his hunting camp where he was fed and permitted to spend the night. The next morning the Indian furnished him with a pony and, mounting another, accompanied the boy on his northward trek, arriving later at the palmetto house of Mr. and Mrs. Trafford who were living on the shores of today's Lake Trafford. After spending a day with the Traffords, young Allen continued on foot over the trail to Fort Myers, where he was hospitably received in the home of the late Captain Hendry, a friend of his father. Captain Hendry notified his Uncle, George Dwight Allen in Key West, by telegraph, that the boy was in Fort Myers, and shortly afterwards the boy proceeded to Key West by schooner to join his brothers and Uncle. Although his brothers pleaded with him to return to his father's home, Dwight Adams remained at Key West for a year or two and finally left for New York where he enlisted in the U. S. Navy.

Subsequently, Mr. Allen visited his father in Everglades but never again took up residence here. His last visit to Everglades was in 1923 when he brought his son on a small yacht to show him the country where he had spent part of his boyhood.

It is interesting to note that, according to Dwight Allen, no Indians visited his father's home while he lived here. However, after he ran away as a boy and had met "Seminole Charlie", his father wrote that Indians had begun coming in to his place. The Indians traded game and other food-stuffs for cloth, trinkets, etc. and would then remain with the Allen family until they had consumed what they had traded. At that time game was very abundant -- wild turkey, deer and panther roaming at will about the yard almost like domestic animals.

Mr. Dwight Allen has never heard any other name for today's Barron's River than "Allen's Creek". Turner's River, to his recollection, had no other name and today's Chokoloskee Island was known as "Big Island". While his father lived at Everglades, there arrived at Everglades Will Gardiner and his brother and a man named Lockhart, who married Gardiner's sister. Will Gardiner operated the Santini schooner "Fannie".

Mr. Dwight Allen has never heard any other name for today's Barron's River than "Allen's Creek". Turner's River, to his recollection, had no other name and today's Chokoloskee Island was known as "Big Island". While his father lived at Everglades, there arrived at Everglades Will Gardiner and his brother and a man named Lockhart, who married Gardiner's sister. Will Gardiner operated the Santini schooner "Fannie".

Mr. Allen states that his niece, Mrs. Sam Goldsmith, 511 Caroline Street, Key West (daughter of his brother, George Whiting Allen) may have interesting information concerning his father.

Mr. Allen also states that his father brought to Everglades a negro man by the name of Richard Hamilton, as a farm helper, and that the negro had a white woman for wife.

Asked concerning the names of local rivers, Mr. Allen stated that the name "Bahkahatchee" is the only one he ever heard applied to today's river of that name. He also stated that Phineas Meyers settled on the large shell mound at the mouth of the Fahkahatchee.

9A. From reference CCXXXV(f) (Ms.)

(a) "Following the tide as it swiftly flows inland through one of the many crooked passes among these keys, we soon come to a long sound called Choculuskee Bay. Of the several creeks arising in the Everglades and flowing into this bay along its eastern shore, it is upon the banks of one that the scenes of our narrative of 60 years (prior to 1930) were enacted.

"It is much easier to describe the beautiful and the agreeable: to carry the imagination of a sympathetic enthralled reader along paths strewn with scenes pleasing to the senses than to try to depict to an indifferent reader the ugly or the disagreeable. We prefer to think of the agreeable, and the aesthetic. And so, in describing the Choculuskee of long ago, it were best, if the pleasure of the reader is considered to ignore its many defects and mention only its attractions.

"Disregard its pests of mosquitoes, sandflies, fleas, roaches, lizards and snakes: say nothing of the wildcats that prowled around our house at night stealing our chickens; nothing of the bears and panthers that hid in the outlying jungle to terrify the bravest heart; nothing of sharks and alligators that prevented our bathing, and deal only with the agreeable.

"Write only of the pleasing and the beautiful: Of the countless thousands of fish swimming in the bay pursued by hungry tarpon and sharks, of miles of oyster bars along its shores and outside among the keys the myriads of clams in the Gulf. Of the flocks of beautiful flamingoes and pink spoonbill curlew that fed along the shores with ducks, plover, snipe and other wild birds; of the deer so plentiful they would range the fields near the house to feed on tender vegetables

.....

"And so, William S. calling the venture a fiasco, loaded all of his portable property into the sloops and started back to Key West. After several days of headwinds and calms, they ran short of water near Pavilion Key and put into Chocoluskee Bay to get a supply.

"Here they found John Weeks living in a palmetto leaved shack on a small clearing with bananas, sugar cane, pumpkins and cow peas growing well in rich soil. He was very generous and gave them a supply of water and all the bananas they could eat, and William S. was so carried away with the location and the richness of the soil that he decided to settle on the creek above the Weeks' place.

"He left all his farm equipment with Mr. Weeks and, loading his sloop with bananas, sugar cane and pumpkins from the Weeks' place, sailed for Key West determined to return soon and establish a homestead at Chocoluskee.

"And this is why William S. Allen, a well-born and educated gentleman from a prominent New England family, in 1869, settled in one of the most inaccessible and desolate places in the world." (From reference CCXXXV(f))

(b) "Soon they were heading up the low mangrove covered coast past Shark River and, finally, they sighted a sandy beach which Scotty said was Lost Man's Key. When the boys asked why they called by that name, Scotty answered: 'I don't know but I can tell why it ought to be called Found Man's Key'.

"He said that a few months before as the 'Jennie' was sailing past Lost Man's Key a man was seen standing on shore waving a signal flag, and when they went in to investigate they found 4 other men, some of whom were almost dead from hunger, thirst and exposure. The men were taken to Choculuskee and housed in a small shack until strong enough to leave for the North....."(From reference CCXXXV(f)).

(c) "This wilderness of islands in the year 1870 contained in its entire length of 82 miles only two known settlements, one at Marco and the other 40 miles to the South so far back among the islands as to be almost inaccessible and called Choculuskee.

"In these pioneer days, a settlement meant a palmetto leafed shack in a small clearing, miles away from any other similar shack or clearing upon another island. Key West, 80 miles from Choculuskee, was the nearest town. It also contained the nearest church, school, store, bar room, horse, cow, or other accessory to the entertainment or comfort of civilized man, and it was also the nearest market for vegetables, sugar cane and bananas raised by these settlers, and shipped there by small coasting schooners." (From reference CCXXXV(f)).

(d) "Passing a flat rock covered by gray pelicans and cormorants, they saw due North a pass wide enough to enter, through which the incoming tide was rapidly flowing. Sailing swiftly along with the tide, before the gale, they followed the crooked winding pass for half an hour until coming out into a long sound, they espied on its opposite shore two miles distant, near a small key, an opening apparently the mouth of a creek.

"It was evening now and rapidly growing dark. As they entered the creek, they saw on its eastern shore a palmetto thatched hut with bananas and sugar cane growing nearby in a small clearing. Being anxious to anchor and make everything aboard the schooner secure before night, they decided to keep on up the creek before stopping. The wind now had become a hurricane.....

"During the hurricane, the high salt tidal waters had submerged the clearing to a depth of 3 feet, killing all tender vegetation, and receding, it had left a deposit of several inches of silt. Banana trees, sugar cane were flattened; the palmetto thatched shack wrecked, and scattered by wind and flood; a more desolate, pitiable scene of what had been a home could hardly be imagined. On a low shell mound nearby, the top of which had remained above the flood, huddled like hunted frightened animals were a man and his three girls. As the skipper and George approached, the man arose and turned toward them aggressively, but changed his mien to glad surprise, as falteringly he grasped the outstretched hand of the smiling skipper and stammered: 'Stranger, I -- er -- I shore em glad t' see ya all.' After an embarrassing silence, during which the timid shrinking girls turned away as if inclined to flee to the nearby woods, the man

continued: 'My name is Weeks -- John Weeks, whut might yo name be?'.....

"Mr. Weeks, what is the name of this place and how long have you lived here?"

Weeks, stimulated by the liquor, answered readily: 'This is Choculuskee -- a Seminole Injun name. I kem yer in '62, what year is this, '69 aint it?'

"Yes. You've been here then 7 years?"

"Seven years is right", answered Weeks, sighing wearily, as if 70 years would have been more accurate.

"I aint got airy dock, er anyway ter tell what day er year it is, en I ferget'.

"Mr. Weeks, does anybody live near here -- any neighbor?"

"No, I don't know o' anybody else livin' near yere, er 'ithin 50 miles o' yere."

"Where did you come from when you came here?"

Weeks hesitating, longingly eyed the aguadiante. After accepting another drink, his mind and tongue seemed more active as he fluently continued.

"I kem yere from Alachua County in '62, durin the War." (From reference C0XXXV(f)).

(e) "I traded the mule and wagon for a sailboat in Cedar Keys and started down the coast. I kept going till I kem to this place, and I've been a livin' yere ever since." Weeks paused to point to his children who were standing among the flattened banana trees. 'Lizzie es I told y', es my stepdatter, my wife bein a widder woman. Apilony th' nex gal was born afore I lef' Alachua County. Sa' Jane the younger was born yere. Her mother died agivin' birth t' her; thar bein no doctor er nobody 'ith her et th' time 'cept me t' tend t' her.'

Weeks stopped speaking and a pensive cast veiled his care worn face as he turned his eyes -- oh so sadly, so lovingly -- to a distant corner of the clearing where, under a lime tree, a sunken mound adorned by seashells was barely visible.

After a hallowed silence, Mr. Allen asked: 'You don't have many visitors, do you Mr. Weeks?'

'No, not many. Nicholas Santini, or his brother, Dolphus stop with their schooner once in a while on thar way from Charlotte Harbor t' Key West. They take my bananas an' sugar cane er whatever I hev ready t' ship t' Key West, an' bring me back flour an' bacon. Th' Santinis hev allers treated me squar an' hones'. Thar's one man though thot's treated me mean, an' that I'd shore like t' meet. He kem yere a year er so ago an' took all th' stuff I hed, bananas, sugar cane an' punkins, saying he'd be right back from Key West with a lot o' grub fer me, an' I aint laid eyes on th' damn scoundrel sence; an' I've hed t' live on things yere thot a nigger wouldn't eat up th' kentry. His name is Joselyn -- Captain Joselyn, an' he runs a big green painted sloop. Mr. Allen did y' ever hear tell of a man in Key West by that name?'

'Yes, I've seen Joselyn in Key West. He has a bad name,

and is under bond now to appear there before the United States court charged with smuggling. They say he has killed several men, was once a pirate, is very rich, and has a hiding place like a pirate's lair among the Ten Thousand Islands where he hides the loot he steals from wrecked vessels along the Florida reef. Joselyn is so mean that no sailor who has sailed with him once, if he comes back alive, will ever ship with him again.'" (From reference CCXXXV(f)).

f) "During George's absence, his father and Weeks went on an exploring trip in the latter's skiff up the creek. Along the banks of each bend of the creek for a mile or more, they found a dense jungle growth on rich soil called 'hammock land'. Mr. Allen was so favorably impressed by this land, upon which many kinds of tropical fruits and vegetables could be raised, that he decided to establish a home on the banks of the creek about a half mile above Weeks' clearing." (From reference CCXXXV(f)).

g) "At another time, they anchored long enough at Pelican Key to gather several messes of clams and then passing close to the beach of Pavilion Key, they headed down the coast. That evening while passing a distant long sandy beach inshore, marked at intervals by scarlet objects on the waterline, George looked in wonder and then asked: 'Scotty, what are those red things on the beach off there?'

"'Flamingoes, George. They are on Lost Man's Key. So many flamingoes are being killed by hunters from Key West that there won't be any around here soon -- nor pink curlews either.'" (From reference CCXXXV(f)).