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First Season Of Seminole Hotel Successful In 1885.
Early Winter Park Visitors Missed Highland Beauty.
Winter Park Home Of Cream Of The Crop.

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LOCAL HISTORY

CITY OF WINTER PARK
History of Winter Park 1880's

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First Season Of Seminole Hotel Successful In 1885

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THE HISTORY

(Editor's Note: This is a continuing series on the history of, and what it was like to live in, Winter Park in 1888.)

During the summer of 1885, the Seminole Hotel was built, and under the management of Mr. Forbes and Mr. Paige achieved during its first

season the highest success. Many patrons were turned away for the lack of accommodations.

The Congregationalists decided to locate Rollins College here, and Knowles Hall (named for Francis B. Knowles) was built in 1885. The first term began in October the same year.

THE ABOVE is but the briefest of outlines of the history of a place which seven years ago was but a "wilderness of pines" and today (1888) stands in the front ranks of Florida winter resorts.

The town plan of Winter Park has for its central idea a beautiful park of about 10 acres, to be planted with

tropical fruits and flowers of every name and kind through the center of which runs the railroad.

The four chief lakes of Winter Park on the north, south, east and west are connected by the broad avenues "Boulevard" and "Interlachen," each over a mile long which, when completed and

lined with orange trees, will make magnificent drives from lake to lake.

LAKEFRONT lots in Winter Park cannot be excelled in all Florida. They front on broad avenues (40 feet above the water line) that skirt the winding shores, and have a gradual and perfect slope to the water's edge

where the shores are firm and solid. Each averages about 600 feet from street to lake, containing as much land as six ordinary town lots. Nearly all have groves of large pines with a carpet of grass growing to the water's edge. Lovely cottages are being built on the lots with superb lake views. (Next, THE HIGHLANDS AND LAKES).

Early WP Visitors Missed Highland Beauty

DES 6-24-70
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Basically, there are two Floridas — the Highlands and the Lowlands. The Highlands are well drained, dry and healthy, while the Lowlands are subjected to dampness, malaria and other diseases.

The Lowlands, as a rule, are found along the river banks, and until recently they have been the only Florida seen by tourists. But since the advent of the railroads, a new Florida has been opened up, and it is fittingly named "The Highlands."

UNTIL THE past few years, the regular trip of the visitor to Florida has been to Jacksonville and St. Augustine. Then, they took a trip down the St. Johns River and stayed aboard ship until it returned to port in Jacksonville. They missed seeing the high and beautiful ridge of land in the interior which forms a Divide, or watershed, of the State upon the crest of which Winter Park is located.

Having thus seen only the Lowlands, the average visitor to Florida returned to his Northern home disgusted with Florida and believing all the talk about its wonderful beauties and resources was one grand humbug. Since the completion

of the trunk line of railway from Sanford across the State to Tampa, 125 miles, people have been able to take in the beauties of the Highlands.

Leaving Sanford on the South Florida Railroad, the train immediately starts to climb, and when it reaches Winter Park 17 miles away, it has climbed to an attitude of 92 feet above the St. Johns River. A ride of a few miles upon the crest, and the train begins to go down hill.

WINTER PARK is also a resort of lakes. There are 11 within 1½ miles of the depot which rival the beauty of

Wisconsin and Minnesota. They vary in size from 100 to 500 acres each, with a combined length of over five miles and a width from one-fourth to one and one-half miles connected by swiftly running streams.

No green scum is ever seen upon them. The waters are pure as crystal and flow into the St. Johns River . . . The shores are solid, and rise gradually to a height of from 20 to 40 feet, affording magnificent sites for villas and hotels. They have sandy bottoms, and are from 20 to 60 feet deep and full of fish.

They are admirably adapted to rowing, sailing and steamboating. The

Hotel Seminole has upon them three steam yachts for use of its guests. A company has been chartered for the purpose of widening and deepening the natural brooks that connect them and running a line of steam yachts between Orlando and the St. Johns River, a distance of 20 miles.

New and beautiful views are seen as one drives along the high and winding banks, beneath the overhanging branches of the tall and stately pines, or saunters leisurely through the orange groves, pausing now and then to pluck the golden fruit.

(Next, WINTER PARK SOCIETY)

Winter Park Home Of Cream Of The Crop

DES 6-25-70

(EDITORS NOTE: This is a continuing series on the history of, and what it was like to live in Winter Park in 1888.)

It must be remembered that this region is comparatively new. However, there are now (1888) 203 families who own lots and orange groves within a two-mile radius of the Winter Park depot. Thirty-one families are from Massachusetts, 28 Illinois, 20 New York, 17 Georgia, etc.

These 203 families represent 29 states of the Union and five foreign countries. Fifty-one families came from Southern States, 141 from Northern States and 11 from foreign countries. The heads of these families are classed politically as follows: Prohibitionists, 8; Democrats, 57, Republicans, 133.

All classes and callings are represented: lawyers, judges, Army and Navy officers, civil engineers, college professors, journalists, physicians, ministers, manufacturers, bishops, merchants, bankers, capitalists, millionaires, etc.

Among noted property owners in and near Winter Park are: R. M. Pulsifer and George D. Rand of Boston; Judge Eugene Cary, William Comstock and C. H. Morse of Chicago; Professors Cook and Metcalf of Illinois State Normal University; Thomas Perriis of Girard College and Dr. W. V. Keating of Philadelphia.

Also, Lewis H. Lawrence, Esq. of Utica, N. Y.; Mrs. Judge Palmer and A. S. Apgar of Merchants' Bank, New York City; Col. Peckham and Dr. J. E. Brecht of St. Louis; John P. Morton, the wealthy publisher, and Mrs. Dr. Bull of cough syrup fame, Louisville, Ky.; Hon. J. I. Hopwood, M.P. of England; Bishop Whipple and F. W. Lyman of Minnesota; Hon. F. F. Adams of Erie, Pa.; H. L. Hart of Detroit; Lt. G. L. Dyer of the U. S. Navy; Gen. J. B. Palmer of Richmond, Va.; Col. Franklin Fairbanks of St. Johnsbury, Vt.; Francis B. Knowles of Worcester, Mass.; Dr. J.

C. Merrit of Cleveland; Judge Welborne of New Jersey; Gen. S. G. French of Georgia; and scores of other well known people.

Such men as Dr. Henry Foster of Clifton Springs, N. Y.; Simeon Farwell of J. V. Farwell & Co., Chicago; Hamilton Disston and J. M. Wilcox of Philadelphia; Gen. H. S. Sanford, late minister to Belgium; Col. Zell of cyclopaedia fame; Col. H. B. Church of the English Army; Charles Amory and E. B. Haskell of "Herald," Boston; H. L. Stebbins, rich publisher of Hartford; Count Wassalief of Russia; Hon. J. G. Sinclair and Hon. Frank Jones of New Hampshire; Col. Fred Grant and heirs of Thurlow Weed of New York, all own places within a few miles of Winter Park.

Such men as the above make up a society that would be pronounced "good" by the most critical in any part of the world.

The question is often asked, "Can persons live in Winter Park all year-round and be comfortable and well?" Most certainly they can. Ask Wilson Phelps, J. C. Stovin, Judge Mizell, H. H. Berry, Col. Livingston, Dr. Ira Geer, W. S. Lane and others who have spent summer and winter here for the past 10 years. They will tell you that they have been perfectly well all the time, and that the summers, instead of being so very hot as people suppose they must of necessity be, are far more comfortable than they are in the North. This seems strange, but is easily accounted for from the fact that cool ocean breezes from the Atlantic and Gulf are constantly blowing across the narrow peninsula over this broad, high plateau. There are delightful showers almost every day in summer which cool the atmosphere.

Judge Mizell has lived here summer and winter since 1858. He has raised a family of four children and has never had a physician in his house.

(Next, Schools, Churches, Hotels)

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WINTER PARK ORANGE COUNTY FLORIDA.

