

Capitol. I would respectfully suggest that with one other basement room at my disposal, I could keep the arms and accoutrements in proper security and order.

Very respectfully,

Your ob't. serv't.,

HUGH ARCHER,  
Quartermaster Gen'l.

## REPORT

### Of the Commissioners of the Indian & St. Johns River Canal.

To His Excellency, M. S. PERRY, Governor of the State of Florida, and ex-officio President of the Board of Internal Improvement of the State of Florida:

The Board of Canal Commissioners appointed for the construction of a Canal connecting the waters of Indian River with the St. John's River, beg leave to make the following report of the progress of said work:

1st. Under the resolution of your honorable body authorizing us to do, we employed Henry McRae, the Chief Engineer of the Deep River and Cape Fear Navigation Company of North Carolina, to make survey at the point fixed by the act of the Legislature, for said Canal and to ascertain the practicability and cost of a Canal connecting said rivers.

As public opinion somewhat called for a Canal thirty feet wide at the bottom, that size was given Mr. McRae from which to make estimates. The surveying party entered upon their duties in January last, and made a very satisfactory survey, a report of which is herewith annexed and to which your Excellency is referred.

The expenses of the survey were more than our Board anticipated—a full report of which is herewith transmitted.

From this report of the Engineer it will be seen that said Canal is practicable and can easily be constructed, if the means therefor are provided.

After the coming in of said report the Commissioners held a meeting and unanimously resolved to adopt the route selected by Mr. McRae—to reduce the size of said Canal to a width of twenty feet at bottom with slopes of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1, and fixed upon one of the two following plans of construction to be adopted after bids received:

1st. Open cut 20 feet wide at bottom with slopes  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1. Guard and lift Lock of corresponding size at Indian River, and Breakwater at Indian River from shore to deep water.

2d. A cut 20 feet wide at bottom, with slopes  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1, with three wooden locks each 6 feet high; Lock of Stone at Indian River, 8 feet lift, and Breakwater at Indian River.

And for the construction of which, notice to contractors has been given and sealed proposals invited until the 1st day of December, 1859. A copy of said notice is transmitted herewith.

This invitation for bids has been extensively circulated and has excited the attention of several persons in other States, and from correspondence with individuals we feel assured that competent contractors will send in proposals which it will be desirable to accept.

2d. That in pursuance with a resolution of the Board of Internal Improvement wherein they "Resolved, That the said Canal Commissioners are hereby authorized so select the lands granted in the 17th Section of the above recited act, whenever in their judgment may seem best: Provided, no selections be made within fifteen (15) miles of the lines of Railroads embraced in Section 4th of the above mentioned act,"—the Commissioners employed Col. James G. Speer, of Orange county, to select the lands granted to said Company, and thus authorized to be selected, and to provide Plat Books and Sale Books necessary for the disposing of the same, the expenses thereof to be defrayed from the lands selected or the proceeds thereof—that said Speer has selected fifty-two thousand acres, and reported the same to the Register of Public Lands for confirmation, and that the same are now being confirmed or rejected, as the case may be.

3d. That said lands have been judiciously selected, and it is confidently believed they will yield on an averages, at least two dollars per acre, which, after deducting expenses of location, &c., will be a fund of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) applicable to said work.

4th. That at a late meeting of said Commissioners it was

Resolved, "That James O. Deval, William D. Moseley and William A. Forward be a committee to go to Tallahassee and meet the Board of Internal Improvement for the purpose of consulting with said Board, as to the size and construction of said Canal, and to unite upon some plan whereby the work may be progressed and the said Canal constructed."

Said commissioners would further report to your Excellency that said committee expect to attend the Board of Internal Improvement at Tallahassee, in accordance with said resolution, at an early day after the first of December next—when said proposals to do the work will have been received, and then and there exhibit all the bids for contracts, maps, plats, plans, profile and report made by the Engineer; humbly trusting that the joint meeting will result in the acceptance of some one of the proposals.

The Board of Internal Improvement recommended the construc-

tion of this Canal and the Legislature of Florida afterwards in the Internal Improvement act of January 6th, 1855, declared it one of the objects within said act, and authorized the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, in the 17th Section of said act, to pay out of said Fund as the work progresses, the whole amount agreed upon by the terms of the contract: *Provided* the entire cost shall not exceed four thousand dollars in money and four thousand acres of land per mile: *Provided further that the Trustees of the Internal Improvement SHALL BE OF THE OPINION* that this sum in money can be applied to said purpose without impairing the efficiency of the Fund for Railroad purposes.

By subsequent act of the Legislature entitled "an act to facilitate the construction of the St. John's and Indian River Canal," passed 1st January, 1857, the Canal Commissioners are authorized to issue bonds bearing interest at 8 per cent. payable semi-annually and pay them out for work on the said Canal or sell them and apply the proceeds.

If the *Trustees* of the Internal Improvement Fund shall be of the opinion that an amount sufficient to meet the *interest* on these bonds can be applied to said purpose without impairing the efficiency of the Fund for Railroad purposes—it is respectfully suggested that the same can be paid out of the above appropriation of four thousand in money per mile, and thereby make said bonds available in the construction of said Canal, and fully justify the Commissioners in their issue, and in giving out the contract.

The Legislature have not as yet made any provision for the purchase of the right of way of said Canal wherein it may run through private lands, and the said Commissioners would humbly ask that an act for the purpose be passed, also an act punishing malicious mischief to any part of said Canal. There is no other legislation that the Commissioners are aware of that will be necessary.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM A. FORWARD,

Chm'n of Board of Canal Commissioners.

PALATKA, November 8th, 1859.

*To the Board of Canal Commissioners Appointed for the Construction of a Canal, connecting the Waters of Indian River with the St. Johns River:*

I have the honor to submit to you the following report, with the accompanying Maps, Profiles and Account of expenditures of the survey of the St. Johns and Indian River Canal made under your instructions dated January 17th, 18

The object of the survey was to ascertain the practicability and cost of a Canal connecting said rivers.

After making an examination of the shores of Lake Harney, and finding the bar at the southern end very wide and shallow, I determined to commence the survey at a point on the eastern shore of the lake about two miles southeast of its northern entrance, where the deep water approaches nearest the shore.

From this point a line was run due east striking Indian River, about three miles south of its head. The distance by this line is  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles, over a country which rises to an elevation of thirty feet above Lake Harney.

Ascertaining by the traverse line that the country was lower to the northward and finding deep water much nearer the shore in Indian River about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of our first line I started from that point running back to Deep Creek about 3000 feet from its mouth and also a line diverging from the last to Lake Harney.

The Deep Creek line although the longest of the three, being  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles, is, I think the most favorable. The Creek from its mouth about a mile north of Lake Harney to the point where the line leaves, is now navigable for either of the steamboats running above Palatka, and is very nearly straight, and eight or ten feet deep up to within a few feet of the bank.

The country along this line is lower than on the first, being at its greatest elevation, about 25 feet above Lake Harney. The material to be excavated on this line will be sand for five or six feet from the surface, and below that, a mixture of clay, shell, and sand. Near Indian River the Coquino makes its appearance near the surface.

Assuming therefore that the Deep Creek line is practicable and the best, I have prepared the following estimates:

1st. For an open cut from Deep Creek with a guard lock at Indian River, the lift of which will vary at different seasons. At present the difference between the two rivers is two feet, but as the St. Johns is at its lowest stage it will generally be greater.

For a Canal from Deep Creek to Indian River, 30 feet wide at bottom with slopes of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1.

3,169,625 cubic yards of Excavation at 20 cts.,	\$633,925 00
Guard and lift lock at Indian River,	19,133 00
Breakwater in Indian River from shore to deep water,	2,836 00

\$655,894 00

2nd. For a Canal with two locks, one of eight feet lift at Deep Creek, and one of ten feet at Indian River. With this arrangement, the Canal will depend entirely for a supply of water upon the country between the rivers. The only water courses that can be depended upon for this purpose, are a large cypress swamp near the line from which several streams issue, and a stream called Cow Pen Branch which crosses the line about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Deep Creek.

These will scarcely hold water enough during the dry season to

supply the loss by the leakage at the locks and evaporation from the Canal, and the quantity consumed by boats passing through the locks. The Canal will, however, drain a number of ponds and smaller swamps which may supply the deficiency. The drainage of these swamps will bring into market a large body of land which is now entirely worthless.

For a Canal 30 feet wide at bottom with slopes of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1.

1,791,360 cubic yards excavation at 20 cts.,	\$358,272 00
Wooden lock at Deep Creek 8 feet lift,	12,000 00
Lock at Indian River 10 feet lift,	20,911 00
Breakwater at Indian River,	2,836 00

\$394,019 00

3rd. For a Canal with four locks—two on the western side of the summit of six feet lift each, and two on the eastern or Indian River side, one of six and the other of eight feet lift. This will bring the Canal up to the greatest elevation to which it can attain and make Cow Pen Branch available for a feeder.

The additional lift lessens the first cost of the work, but has the disadvantage of having two more locks to pass through and keep in repair. This in time will be a serious objection if wooden locks are built, as they will not last more than ten or twelve years without renewing.

For a Canal 30 feet wide at bottom with slopes of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1.

1,306,010 cubic yards excavation at 20 cts.,	\$261,202 00
3 wooden locks each 6 feet lift,	27,000 00
Lock at Indian River 8 feet lift,	19,500 00
Breakwater at Indian River,	2,836 00

\$310,538 00

I have no hesitation notwithstanding the additional cost, in recommending the open cut from Deep Creek, as there would never be any doubt about a supply of water, and the Canal could be navigated and kept up at less expense.

By getting above the St. Johns with lift locks, the expense of keeping locks and embankments in repair is added to the annual cost of keeping up the work; and these may be a scarcity of water during dry seasons.

The advantage which will accrue to the State in the construction of this Canal, are incalculable, many of which, however, are correctly set forth by Col. DANCY in his report.

A union of the St. Johns and Indian River, will add greatly to the commerce of the St. Johns, and give to South Florida facilities which that healthy region demands.

With my best wishes for the success of the work,

I am very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY McRAE.

*Extract from the Report of Col. Dancy above referred to, viz:*

"Now we will enquire, what are the 'inducements for the State to expend such an amount for this purpose. In the first place, I have been informed by the State Agent for the selection of swamp lands, that he has taken the whole country South of Township 20, South, Range 33, East, with the exception of the Private Grants and a few fractional Townships, so far as public surveys have yet extended.

This would give the State in the District lying contiguous to the St. Johns and Indian River, to the mouth of the St. Lucie River, something over 1,300,000 acres of land; which, under the present circumstances, is literally worthless, from the fact that it is almost inaccessible either by land or water, there being as good as no bar seaward from Indian River, that which is known as the bar, constantly shifting, and has at best only from three to five feet of water, and no roads, if we except the Military Road from Fort Capron on Indian River across the Peninsula to Charlotte Harbor on the Gulf Coast.

As to the value of these lands, I am satisfied, from my own observation, that there is scarcely a single mile in the whole length of Indian River on the western bank, (which is in general from 10 to 30 feet high, with miles of a bold, rocky shore,) where small bodies of excellent land, suitable for 5 to 10 working hands could be obtained, and where from the delicious and genial climate, most, if not all the Tropical fruits and vegetables, as well as sugar-cane may be raised in perfection.

The lands back from the River are, in places, high, rolling spruce pine, and scrub oak ridges, with frequent ponds and savannas, with occasional small, rich hammocks, and many beautiful pine ridges convenient for stock raising, with excellent range, both on the St. Johns prairies and in the low lands and ponds intervening between it and Indian River. These lands if furnished with a suitable outlet, would, in a very few years, command much of them from \$2 to \$10 per acre; and their enhanced value would double, aye, treble the outlay necessary to open this Canal. Besides which, Indian River could be made to supply the whole of Florida, and in fact, the whole Southern Atlantic market with fish and oysters of the finest quality.

It would open an outlet to the markets of the whole country, of the finest tropical fruit region in the United States. Moreover, no healthier region can be found in America, than the west bank of Indian River, and between it and the ocean. In a military point of view, it would be of incalculable benefit, as it would enable the Government to send troops, supplies, &c., inland by water from Charleston, S. C., to within a few miles of Cape Florida, without the least danger, either from storms or hostile fleets. It would add to the commerce of Florida, through the St. Johns River, an amount which at this day cannot even be approximated. This link of twelve miles

would give to East and South Florida, and improvement that will vastly facilitate their intercourse and commerce with the rest of the world, and which, from the peculiar features of the country, would do for it what the system of Railroads proposed in another communication would do for the other portion of the State."

#### NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

PALATKA, FLA., September 15th, 1859.

Sealed Proposals will be received by the undersigned, at Folatka, until the 1st day of December, 1859, for constructing a Canal on the Deep Creek line selected by Henry McRae, Civil Engineer, from Lake Harney, on the St. John's river to Indian river, a distance of twelve and a half miles, authorized by the General Assembly of the State of Florida at its session of 1854-'55, by an act entitled "An Act to provide for and encourage a liberal system of Internal Improvements in this State," and by subsequent act to facilitate the same. One of the two following plans of construction will be adopted by the Commissioners after bids received:

1st. Open cut 20 feet wide at bottom, with slopes of 1½ to 1.—Guard and lift Lock of corresponding size at Indian river, and Breakwater in Indian river, from shore to deep water.

2d. A cut 20 feet wide at bottom, with slopes 1½ to 1, with three wooden Locks each 6 feet high; Lock of stone at Indian river 8 feet lift, and Breakwater at Indian river.

The country along this line, according to report of said Engineer, is at its greatest elevation about 25 feet above Lake Harney, and the material to be excavated will be sand for 5 or 6 feet from the surface, and below that a mixture of clay, shell, and sand. Near Indian river coquina makes its appearance near the surface.

Proposals will specify for which of said plans they bid, and also the amount per cubic yard for excavation—amount for each specified Lock and Breakwater.

There being lands and bonds appropriated for the construction thereof, the proposals will further specify in what portion of each the payment is to be made.

Maps, profiles, and estimates can be seen by calling on the undersigned, and any information obtained by addressing him at Palatka.

#### ALSO:

Proposals will be received at the same time and place for the draining of the "Plain Savanna, in the County of St. Lucie," now known as the County of Brevard, authorized by resolution of the General Assembly of Florida passed 14th January, A. D., 1853, and by subsequent resolution thereof passed 15th January, A. D., 1859; for the draining of which, according to the Report of Col. F. L. Dancy, State Engineer and Geologist, reported the 5th August, 1854, a cut

is required from said Savanna to the St. Lucie sound, at a place known as "Capt. Davis's," 12 feet wide at bottom, and side slopes 1½ horizontal to 1 vertical, 550 feet in length, with an elevation at the highest point of 33 feet and four inches. Excavation estimated at eleven thousand cubic yards of earth—the bed of the Savanna being 15 feet 3 inches higher than the water level of St. Lucie sound, and the greatest depth thereof not exceeding 5 feet.

Proposals will specify the amount per cubic yard for which the said work will be done.

By order of the Board:

JAMES O. DEVAL,  
Sec'y and Treasurer of the  
Board of Canal Commissioners.

WILLIAM A. FORWARD, Chairman Canal Commissioners, in Account  
with Board of Internal Improvement.

1859.	Cr.	
March—By paid H. McRae, Engineer, (see voucher No. 1)	\$437	60
" Alfred Sears, Ass't,	2	281 55
" J. C. Gregg,	3	203 76
" E. W. Perry,	4	30 00
" C. S. Brown, hand,	5	40 00
" D. Dunham,	6	28 00
" Thos. Williams, hand,	7	28 00
" Wm. L. Nichols,	8	28 00
" Samuel Wings,	9	28 00
" Henry Crabtree,	10	28 00
" John Houston,	11	28 00
" Sol. Thomas,	12	37 33
" Elijah Watson's (bill)	13	143 25
" C. Drew's	14	46 33
" Burton & Graves	15	240 90
" Bisbee & Canova	16	74 27
" Capt. J. Brock	17	41 50
" do	18	26 00
" Steamer Barnett	19	13 50
" Theo. Hartridge	20	32 68
" Walter Kippe	21	19 75
" C. Oak	22	15 00
" S. Fairbanks	23	13 00
" D. R. Dunham	24	18 00
" Wm. Luffman	25	5 50

Amount carried forward,

\$1,887 92

Amount brought over,			\$1,887 92
March—By paid Chas. Griffith's bill, (see voucher 26)		26	6 00
" " H. E. Osteen " " "		27	8 00
" " J. C. Houston " " "		28	8 00
" " Capt. J. Brock " " "		29	46 00
" " O. L. Keene " " "		30	13 50
" " John O. Nealy " " "		31	10 00
" " Sarah A. Houston " " "		32	5 00
" " Barbara Ivers " " "		33	3 00
" " Sarah A. Clarke " " "		34	3 00
" " Alfred Sears " " "		35	4 05

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\$1,994 47

Mr. Drew's bill for printing Notices for bids, 36  
 "Standard" for extra copies of Report of Engineer,

1858.	Dr.		\$995 03
Nov. 15—To received of Treasurer,			995 03
Jan. 28— " " " "			

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\$1,990 06

185 .			10 75
March—To cash received from sale of camp stores,			23 95
" " " " " " " "			
" " " " Auctioneer (Collins) for articles sold (see bill),			27 62
" " " " Articles sold to Mr. Gregg, not yet paid for,			
" " " " Stationery, &c., sold to Mr. Drew,			
" " " " 1 cent on hand,			

I, William A. Forward, do hereby certify the foregoing account to be a correct account of the receipts and expenditures made by me as Chairman of the Board of Canal Commissioners.

Witness my hand and seal of said Company, this 8th day of  
 [L. s.] November, A. D., 1859.

WILLIAM A. FORWARD, Chairman.

HOUSE JOURNAL.

A

Journal of Proceedings

OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OF THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

State of Florida,

AT AN

ADJOURNED SESSION,

BEGUN AND HELD AT THE CAPITOL, IN THE CITY OF TALLAHASSEE, ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH, 1859.

Tallahassee :

OFFICE OF THE FLORIDIAN AND JOURNAL.

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1859.