

THE RUSKIN STORY FROM THE
BEGINNING

ABOUT 1903 THERE WAS A FAMILY BY THE NAME OF WILLIAMS (OF WHICH I HAVE WRITTEN SOME BEFORE). MENTION OF THEM AGAIN IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE LITTLE KNOWN, BUT IMPORTANT EPISODE WHICH OCCURRED WHILE MRS. WILLIAMS WITH HER CHILDREN, WERE ON THE TRAIN GOING TO THEIR SUMMER HOME IN THE CAROLINA MOUNTAINS. THE DATE MAY HAVE BEEN A YEAR OR TWO LATER. MY SOURCE FOR THE STORY WAS ONE OF THE WILLIAMS BOYS WHO WAS ABOUT 6 YEARS OLD AT THE TIME. HIS MEMORY IS NOT QUITE CLEAR AS TO THE EXACT TIME.

ANYHOW, HERE IS THE STORY AS HE TOLD IT TO ME. NORTON WILLIAMS, ALONG WITH THE MOTHER AND THE OTHER CHILDREN WERE ON THE TRAIN GOING TO THE MOUNTAINS, WHEN A TALL GENTLEMAN WITH A MOUSTACHE WHO WAS SEATED ACROSS THE AISLE OFFERED THE CHILDREN SOME APPLES. THIS LED TO AN INTRODUCTION, AND IN THE CONVERSATION, DR. MILLER WHO WAS THE MAN WHO OFFERED THE CHILDREN THE APPLES, TOLD MRS. WILLIAMS THAT HE HAD BEEN TO FLORIDA SEARCHING FOR A SUITABLE PLACE TO ESTABLISH A COLLEGE, AND WAS RETURNING HOME WITHOUT HAVING FOUND SUCH A PLACE. NOW MR. WILLIAM'S HUSBAND WAS AT THE TIME OPERATING A TURPENTINE STILL ON WHAT WAS KNOWN AS MARSH BRANCH, ABOUT A MILE EAST OF THE PRESENT SITE OF RUSKIN. WHETHER WILLIAMS OWNED THE LAND IS NOT CLEAR. HE MAY HAVE BEEN WORKING THE TURPENTINE CROP ON A LEASE BASIS. THE LAND WAS LATER BOUGHT BY THE DICKMAN AND MILLER FAMILIES, OWNED BY CAPTAIN DAVIS.

HOWEVER, MRS. WILLIAM'S DESCRIPTION OF THE TRACT INTRIGUED DR. MILLER SO HE CAME BACK DOWN TO SEE ABOUT IT. AS A RESULT OF THIS CASUAL TRAIN ACQUAINTANCE, THE SEED WAS PLANTED WHICH ULTIMATELY LED TO THE PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AND TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TOWN OF RUSKIN.

NOW DR. MILLER HAD MARRIED ADELINE MILLER WHEN HE LIVED IN CHICAGO WHERE HE WAS AT ONE TIME A PROSECUTING ATTORNEY FOR THAT CITY. HE WAS ALSO AN EDUCATOR AND A MAN OF WIDE LEARNING. HE WAS DESCRIBED AS BEING A SOMEWHAT IDEALISTIC MAN AND A GREAT HUMANITARIAN. EVERYONE WHO KNEW HIM REMEMBERS HIM AS A TALL KINDLY MAN WITH A MUSTACHE. HE WAS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS AND UNALTERABLY OPPOSED TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND TOBACCO.

THE STORY CONTINUES. DR. MILLER'S SISTER MARRIED MR. A. P. DICKMAN, WHICH

MADE THEM DOUBLE BROTHERS-IN-LAW. THE DICKMANS WERE PRIMARILY FARMERS IN MISSOURI BUT MR. DICKMAN HAD GONE TO THE CITY TO WORK BUT STILL RETAINED HIS FARM LANDS IN IOWA.

WHEN DR. MILLER RETURNED TO CHICAGO, HE HAD DECIDED TO RETURN TO RUSKIN AND ATTEMPT TO RE-ESTABLISH A COLLEGE HERE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING EDUCATION FOR THOSE WHO WERE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE COSTLY FACILITIES IN THE NORTH. HIS IDEA WAS TO ENROLL STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC WORK FOR SIX MONTHS AND TO PROVIDE WORK ON THE COLLEGE FARMS FOR THE REMAINING SIX MONTHS, THEREBY ENABLING THEM TO EARN THEIR TUITION.

IN 1906 HE CAME BACK TO RUSKIN WITH HIS FAMILY. THEY LANDED AT TAMPA AND CAME TO THE VICINITY OF SHELL POINT WHERE THEY LIVED FOR A TIME IN WHAT WAS KNOWN AS THE OLD HOTEL. I BELIEVE THEY LATER MOVED INTO A SMALLER PLACE WHERE THEY LIVED FOR SOMETIME.

IN 1907 DR. MILLER SUCCEEDED IN BRINGING A. P. DICKMAN DOWN TO LOOK OVER THE POSSIBILITIES FOR PURCHASING LAND IN THE AREA, SINCE HE HAD BECOME CONVINCED BY HIS TIME THAT THIS WAS INDEED THE PLACE TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL OF THE TYPE HE HAD LONG DREAMED OF.

MR. DICKMAN WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE AREA, AND NEGOTIATIONS WERE BEGUN FOR THE PURCHASE OF SOME 12,000 ACRES OF LAND FROM CAPTAIN DAVIS, WHICH NOW COMPRISES MOST OF THE SECTIONS FROM THE RIVER ON THE SOUTH TO APOLLO BEACH ON THE NORTH.

MR. DICKMAN TRADED THREE MISSOURI FARMS AS A DOWN PAYMENT ON THE LAND, WHICH WAS VALUED AT ABOUT \$2.00 PER ACRE.

WHEN THE DICKMANS PULLED UP STAKES IN MISSOURI, A.P., LOADED A FREIGHT CAR WITH A TEAM OF MULES, A WAGON, A COW AND TWO BERKSHIRE HOGS, PRESUMABLY A MALE AND A FEMALE, AND ENOUGH HOUSEHOLD GOODS TO SET UP HOUSEKEEPING. ALSO SOME FARM IMPLEMENTS, AND OTHER NECESSITIES. IN ORDER TO SHIP THE STOCK, MR. DICKMAN HAD TO TRAVEL IN THE BOX CAR WITH THE ANIMALS. HIS FAMILY CAME DOWN ON THE TRAIN. WHETHER HIS BROTHERS CAME DOWN AT THIS TIME IS NOT CLEAR. THE ONLY ONES I HAVE BEEN TOLD

ABOUT AT THIS TIME WERE MRS. DICKMAN AND THE TWO CHILDREN, PAUL AND PAULINE, WHOM AS YOU MAY HAVE GUESSED WERE TWINS. THEY WERE 11 YEARS OF AGE AT THE TIME AND PAUL TOLD ME OF SOME OF THEIR FIRST IMPRESSIONS UPON ARRIVING IN THIS TOTALLY NEW, TO THEM, ENVIRONMENT.

MR. DICKMAN WAS FIVE DAYS MAKING THE TRIP IN THE FRIEGHT CAR AND WHEN HE ARRIVED AT JACKSONVILLE, THE RAILROAD COMPANY DEMANDED THAT HE PAY A FULL FARE FOR HIMSELF ON DOWN TO WIMAUMA. HE REPLIED THAT IF HE PAID A FARE HE WOULD RIDE THE PASSENGER CAR AND THEY WOULD HAVE TO LOOK AFTER HIS STOCK. AFTER SOME BICKERING, THE COMPANY DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE CHEAPER TO LET HIM RIDE THAN TO HAVE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIVESTOCK.

THE SEABOARD RAILROAD HAD BUILT A LINE TO THE BRADENTON AREA IN 1902, AND WIMAUMA, 8 MILES TO THE EAST OF RUSKIN, WAS THE NEAREST RAIL STATION TO THE DICKMAN HOLDINGS. IT WAS HERE THAT DR. MILLER MRS. DICKMAN AND THE CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN FLORIDA. HE WAS DRIVING A HORSE HITCHED TO A SMALL BUCKBOARD AND HE AND MRS. DICKMAN WERE ABOUT ALL THAT COULD RIDE, SO PAUL AND PAULINE HAD TO WALK THE EIGHT MILES TO THEIR NEW HOME.

PAUL SAID THAT HE RECALLED THAT THERE WAS A MAN AT WIMAUMA WHO WANTED TO COME TO RUSKIN AND DR. MILLER PERMITTED HIM TO RIDE ALONG IN THE RIG ALTHOUGH HE WAS PRETTY DRUNK. IT SEEMS THAT THE DR COULD NOT REFUSE AID TO ANY PILGRIM WHO HAPPENED TO COME ALONG. SO THE TWO CHILDREN WALKED, THEIR SHOES, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THEIR LIVES, BOGGING TO THE ANKLES IN THE DEEP SAND OF THE ROADWAY. THE ROAD WAS MERELY TWO RUTS AND A HORSE PATH IN THE MIDDLE, AND CORSSSED SEVERAL CREEKS ON THE WAY WHICH WERE PRABABLY DRY AT THAT TIME OF THE YEAR. THE PALMETTO FANS WHICH HUNG OVER THE ROAD RUTS STRUCK THEIR LEGS AND THE WHITE SAND RESEMBLED SNOW TO THE KIDS. THEY HAD TO MAKE FREQUENT STOPS TO REST THE HORSE AS THE DEEP SAND MADE THE BUCKBOARD WITH ITS CARGO PRETTY HEAVY. THEY FINALLY ARRIVED AT THEIR NEW HOME AND I SHOULD LIKE TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO RECORD THE CHILDRENS FEELINGS AT THIS POINT, BUT PAUL NEVER GAVE THEM TO ME.

= WHEN THE DICKMAN AND MILLER FAMILIES CAME TO THE AREA THEY HAD TO FIND A PLACE TO LIVE. HOUSES WERE NOT EXACTLY PLENTIFUL, AND THE BEST THEY COULD DO WAS A PLANKED FOREMAN'S HOUSE OUT ON MARSH BRANCH, INSIDE THE CONVICT STOCKADE. THERE WAS AN OLD BUILDING THERE WHICH HAD BEEN USED FOR A STORE OR COMMISARY, WHICH THEY PRESSED INTO SERVICE AS A SCHOOL. THIS WAS IN FEBRUARY 1908. PAUL AND PAULINE WERE 11 YEARS OLD.

THE COUNTY SCHOOL AUTHORITIES AGREED TO PAY THE TEACHER \$25.00 A MONTH, PROVIDED THERE WERE 12 CHILDREN IN ATTENDANCE AND GOING TO SCHOOL EACH DAY. IT WAS SAID THAT SEVERAL OF THE OLD TIMERS OBJECTED TO A SCHOOL AND KEPT WATCH ON THE PLACE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE RULE WAS CARRIED OUT. IF IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE AVERAGE WAS NOT MET, THE SCHOOL BOARD WOULD REFUSE TO PAY THE TEACHER, AND THE SCHOOL WOULD HAVE TO CLOSE. MISS AURORA MILLER WAS THE TEACHER. ON THE ROLLS WERE PAUL AND PAULINE DICKMAN, WILLARD AND O.D. MILLER, SONNY AND SHUB BUZBEE, WILBURNS CHILDREN,

SHUG LATER BECAME MOSE HEWITT'S WIFE. SHUG WRIGHT WHO LATER BECAME SONNY DAVIS' WIFE, BUT I BELIEVE WAS A MANNING. THERE WERE ALSO TWO OF ANDREW ANDREWS' CHILDREN AND WILBURN SAFFOLD AND BEN MANNING. THIS IS ALL PAUL COULD RECALL. FOR SANITARY FACILITIES THERE WERE SEVERAL CONVENIENT PALMETTO BUNCHES AND SOME BIG OLD FAT LIGHTERED STUMPS NEARBY. WATER WAS FROM A COMMON DRINKING WELL, NO CUPS PROVIDED. IN LIEU OF TOILET PAPER, TREE MOSS MADE A VERY ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE.

THERE WAS NO FOOTBALL OR OTHER PHYSICAL EDUCATION FACILITIES, JUST THE THREE "R"s WERE TAUGHT. PLAY CONSISTED OF A RAG BALL GAME AND OTHER SIMPLE GAMES. THERE WERE ABOUT 18 CHILDREN IN ALL. ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE OF THEM WERE "YANKEES" AS THE LOCAL PEOPLE CHOSE TO CALL THEM. THE ORIGINAL SETTLERS RESENTED THE YANKEES COMING INTO THE AREA AND MADE LITTLE ATTEMPT TO HIDE THEIR FEELINGS ABOUT IT. THEY OBJECTED TO PAYING TAXES TO EDUCATE THEM, BUT WANTED THEIR OWN TO HAVE A SCHOOL. YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER AND REMEMBER THAT THESE PEOPLE WHO WERE ALREADY HERE WHEN THE NORTHERNERS CAME WERE HARDLY A GENERATION REMOVED FROM THE RECENT CIVIL WAR AND THE

WOUNDS OF THIS TRAGIC CONFLICT WERE SCARCELY HEALED.

THE DICKMAN FAMILY WERE, OF COURSE, THE FIRST TO COME AFTER THE MILLERS, ABOUT THREE YEARS. AS WE HAVE MENTIONED BEFORE, THERE WAS A.P., PAUL'S FATHER, AND THERE WAS L.L. AND N.E., ANOTHER BROTHER. N.E. OR DON AS HE WAS SOMETIMES CALLED, HAD A TEAM OF MULES, AND DID QUITE A BIT OF HAULING AND PLOWING FOR THE NEIGHBORS. PAUL SAID HE WAS THE KIND OF MAN WHO WOULD NEGLECT HIS OWN WORK TO GO TO THE AID OF A NEIGHBOR. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT DON DIED EARLY IN LIFE OR THAT HE LEFT THE COUNTRY. O.D. MILLER I KNOW DIDN'T STAY AROUND LONG AFTER HE GREW UP. HE WENT TO ARIZONA AND BECAME QUITE A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS MAN. WILLARD CHOSE TO STAY HERE AND DID A LOT OF FARMING IN THE EARLY DAYS. HE LATER ENTERED THE REAL ESTATE BUSINESS AND SEEMS TO BE PRSPEROUS.

WHEN THE DICKMANS ACQUIRED THE LAND WHICH COMPRISES ALL OF THE RUSKIN AREA EXCEPT SOME ACREAGE ALONG THE RIVER NEAR THE BRIDGE, THERE WERE NO ROADS TO SPEAK OF EXCEPT ONE POSTED ROAD FROM SHELL POINT TO THE ALAFIA RIVER, ABOUT 12 MILES TO THE NORTH. IT WAS SIMPLY TWO WAGON TRACKS WHICH WOUND AROUND THE EDGES OF THE FLAT WOODS PONDS AND THROUGH THE PINE AND PALMETTO STRANDS. THIS TYPE ROAD HAD BEEN MADE BY THE SIMPLE PROCESS OF FOLLOWING YOUR NOSE OR GOING IN THE GENERAL DIRECTION OF YOUR OBJECTIVE, WHICH MIGHT BE TO THE NEXT NEIGHBOR'S PLACE, OR TO THE NEARBY BAY FOR FISH.

THERE WERE NO RECOGNIZED OR COUNTY ROADS AS WE KNOW THEM. FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS IN THE YEAR, THERE WAS WATER ALL OVER THE FLAT WOODS AND IT WAS COMMON PRACTICE TO RIDE OR DRIVE FOR MILES WITHOUT EVER GETTING ON TO DRY LAND. THERE WERE NO BRIDGES OVER THE ALAFIA RIVER OR THE LITTLE MANATEE. THERE WAS SOME FERRY SERVICE, BUT THIS WAS UNCERTAIN AND MANY OF THE TEAMS SIMPLY COULD NOT BE DRIVEN ONTO A FLAT SCOM FOR THE CROSSING.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COULD NOT BE PERSUADED TO GRADE A ROAD. THEY SAID THAT ANYBODY KNEW THAT THE LAND DOWN ALONG THE BAYSHORE WAS NOT GOOD FOR ANYTHING ANYWAY AND NOBODY BUT A YANKEE WOULD EVER TH;NK OF BUYING IT FOR A HOBESITE MUCH LESS A FARM

EVERYBODY KNEW THAT THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH GRASS ON 40 ACRES TO KEEP A WOODS COW. BUT THE DICKMANS HAD THEIR LIFE SAVINGS IN THE LAND. THEY HAD COMMITTED THEMSELVES, FOR BETTER OR WORSE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PALMETTOS AND FIDDLER BEACHES. MANY PEOPLE CAME AND TOOK ONE LOOK, FOUGHT MOSQUITOS AND SAND FLIES FOR A DAY OR TWO AND FLED BACK TO THEIR COLD NORTH. THE DICKMANS WERE MADE OF STERNER STUFF. THEY STUCK IT OUT AND WENT AHEAD WITH THEIR PLANS. DR. MILLER HAD COME HERE TO MAKE A COLLEGE AND FULFILL A DREAM AND HE INTENDED TO DO IT WITH THE HELP OF HIS RELATIVES THE DICKMANS.

THEY BUCKLED DOWN, IN THE TRUE SPIRIT, AND BEGAN TO BUILD A COMMUNITY FOR POSTERITY. THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING GOING FOR THEM BUT DETERMINATION. LESSER MEN WOULD HAVE THROWN UP THEIR HANDS AND GIVEN UP. THEY BUILT A COLLEGE, THEY PEOPLED IT WITH STUDENTS FROM FAR AND NEAR. THEY CLEARED SOME 15 ACRES OF PALMETTOS AND PINES AND STARTED GARDENING. THE STUDENTS WORKED IN THE GARDENS AND ATE THE VEGETABLES THEY GREW, AND SOLD WHAT THEY COULD. THEY DEVELOPED A SYSTEM OF EXCHANGE KNOWN AS SCRIP. THEY PARCELLED OUT THE OUT-LYING LAND TO NEW SETTLERS AT TEN DOLLARS AN ACRE AND TEN DOLLARS FOR A BUILDING LOT IN TOWN. TEN ACRES AND A BUILDING LOT COULD BE BOUGHT FOR \$110.00. THEIR SCRIP WAS GOOD FOR PURCHASES AT THE CO-OPERATIVE STORE. THEY DIDN'T HAVE MUCH LUCK GETTING THE NATIVES TO TAKE IT, BUT THE NATIVES WORKED ON CREDIT OR TOOK GROCERIES IN TRADE.

THEY TRANSPORTED THEIR SUPPLIES FROM TAMPA BY BOAT. A.P. DICKMAN HAD A BOAT WHICH HE RAN TO TAMPA ON A WEEKLY BASIS, CARRYING PRODUCE AND EGGS AND POULTRY, AS WELL AS PASSENGERS. PAUL WAS THE ENGINEER, FOR MANY YEARS, DURING HIS BOYHOOD. THEY TOOK SUCH PRODUCE AS THEY COULD TO THE TAMPA DOCKS WHERE THEY SOLD IT TO THE LATIN PEDDLERS.

THEY ASKED THE COUNTY AUTHORITIES FOR A ROAD, THEY WERE TURNED DOWN. SO THEY ISSUED BONDS FOR THE DISTRICT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$30,000.00 AND WITH THIS MONEY THEY BUILT A BRIDGE OVER THE ALAFIA RIVER. THEY BUILT A NINE FOOT SHELL ROAD FROM THE ALAFIA RIVER TO THE MANATEE COUNTY LINE. THEY BUILT A WOODEN BRIDGE ACROSS THE LITTLE MANATEE RIVER. ALL WITH \$30,000.00

AUTOMOBILES WERE BEGINNING TO BE SEEN AROUND, AND WITH THE BUILDING OF THE ROADS

PAUL AND PAULINE HAD A MODEL T WHICH THEY USED JOINTLY AND WITH WHICH THEY ATTENDED SCHOOL AT BRADENTON WHEN THEY BECAME READY FOR HIGH SCHOOL.

ALF. DICKMAN STARTED A DAIRY AND FOR MANY YEARS PAULINE DELIVERED MILK TO THE NEIGHBORS. THEY BUILT A CANNERY AND CANNED TOMATOES AND OTHER PRODUCE BY THE OLD LABORIOUS HAND METHOD. EVERY CAN HAD TO BE SEALED WITH SOLDER BY HAND. THEY HAD A CO-OPERATIVE STORE AND PAULINE WAS CLERK THERE FOR A LONG TIME. AS A YOUTH, PAUL USED TO LIKE TO GO GATOR HUNTING WITH WILBURN BUZBEE. HERE HE LEARNED TO CALL THE GATOR TO THE SURFACE AND SHOOT HIM, AFTERWARDS SKINNING HIM FOR THE MARKET. AS A BOY IN HIS MISSOURI HOME, PAUL KNEW SOMETHING ABOUT FARM LIFE, BUT THIS WAS NOT MISSOURI, AND ENTIRELY DIFFERENT METHODS HAD TO BE USED FOR THE GROWING OF CROPS. THERE WAS WATER EVERYWHERE THAT HAD TO BE DRAINED OFF THE LAND. THE COUNTY FINALLY AGREED TO FURNISH A DRAGLINE IF THEY WOULD PAY THE OPERATOR. THEY HIRED DON FREEMAN AND DON DUG DRAINAGE DITCHES AT PAUL'S DIRECTION. PAUL DID THE SURVEYING, SINCE HE HAD OBTAINED A COLLEGE EDUCATION RIGHT HERE AT HOME. BUT I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF.

WHEN THE FIRST WORLD WAR BROKE OUT, PAUL WAS DRAFTED AND WAS SENT TO OFFICERS CANDIDATE SCHOOL, BUT NEVER MADE AN OFFICER, AND NEVER GOT OVERSEAS. THE WAR ENDED AND PAUL CAME HOME AND TOOK OVER THE SAWMILL OPERATION AND SAWED LUMBER FOR SOME YEARS. WHEN THE RAILROAD CAME THROUGH IN 1918, THE DICKMANS GOT A CONTRACT FOR TELEGRAPH POLES AND FENCE POSTS. THE RAILROAD HAD TO FENCE THE RIGHT-OF-WAY AND PUT UP CATTLE GUARDS AT EVERY CROSSING, SINCE THERE WERE NO FENCE LAWS AND CATTLE ROAMED AT WILL.

LATER, IN 1928 I THINK, LAWS WERE PASSED TO MAKE CATTLEMEN FENCE PASTURES AND KEEP THE STOCK CONFINED. WHEN THE ROADS GOT BETTER AND THE CARS BEGAN TO BE MORE PLENTIFUL, THERE WERE MANY ACCIDENTS CAUSED BY LOOSE STOCK SLEEPING ON THE HIGHWAYS. HITTING A COW WAS JUST LIKE RAMMING A STONE WALL, AND COULD CAUSE DESTRUCTION OF THE VEHICLE AS WELL AS ENDANGER LIFE. THE CATTLEMEN FOUGHT THE LEGISLATION FOR YEARS BUT PUBLIC OPINION FORCED THEM TO CAPITULATE. THERE WAS LOTS OF GOOD TIMBER ON THE DICKMAN HOLDINGS AND THEY USED IT FOR BUILDINGS ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS AND FOR THEIR

OWN HOMES. THEY HAD NO PLANING FACILITIES AND ROUGH BOARDS WERE USED. BOX TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION WAS MOST COMMONLY USED. WHEN THE A.O.DICKMAN HOME, WHICH STILL STANDS JUST WEST OF THE HIGHWAY AND SOUTH OF THE INLET, WAS BUILT, DRESSED LUMBER WAS IMPORTED FROM THE TAMPA MILLS.

THE ONLY COLLEGE BUILDINGS LEFT AT THIS WRITING ARE THE WOMAN'S CLUB AND THE PRESENT HOME OF MILFORD JORGENSEN. THE WOMEN'S CLUB BUILDING WAS USED FOR CLASSROOMS AND THE JORGENSEN HOME WAS BUILT FOR AURORA MILLER AND SERVED AS A MUSIC STUDIO. IT IS LOCATED ABOUT HALF A MILE WEST OF THE HIGHWAY ON FOURTH STREET. THE LARGE STUCCO HOUSE NOW OCCUPIED BY LYLE DICKMAN, AND STANDING ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY AT FOURTH STREET, WAS THE HOME OF L.L.DICKMAN.

THE FIRST POST OFFICE WAS IN A COLLEGE BUILDING ON COLLEGE AVENUE, WEST OF THE HIGHWAY. IT WAS A LITTLE SIDE ROOM OFF THE MAIN HOUSE AND WAS OPERATED BY ONE OF THE DICKMAN WOMEN, OR BY MRS. MILLER.

MAIL WAS BROUGHT OVER FROM WIMAUMA BY HORSE AND BUGGY OR HORSE BACK, AFTER THE SEABOARD RAILROAD WAS BUILT FROM TAMPA TO BRADENTON IN 1902. BEFORE THIS, THE MAIL CAME DOWN FROM TAMPA ON THE BOAT.

WITH THE COMING OF THE RAIL LINES AND THE BUILDING OF HIGHWAYS, BOATS WERE DISCARDED, AND SOME OF THE ROMANCE OF THE RIVER WAS LOST. VAST CHANGES WERE IN THE MAKING, AND PEOPLE BEGAN TO SEE THE POTENTIAL OF THE FLAT WOODS LANDS AS TRUCK PRODUCING AREAS. ARTESIAN WATER WAS PLENTIFUL AND DRAINAGE MADE THE LAND TILLABLE. ALL THAT REMAINED WAS TO DISCOVER WHAT CROPS GREW BEST. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS WERE FAVORABLE FOR WINTER PRODUCTION. FROST WAS RARE, AND GROWING WEATHER WAS FROM SEPTEMBER TILL JUNE. NORTHERN MARKETS WERE HUNGRY FOR WINTER GROWN TRUCK.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIALS BECAME INTERESTED, AND SOILS WERE EXAMINED AND CLASSIFIED. IT WAS FOUND THAT MOST OF THE LAND AROUND THE AREA WAS UNDERLAID WITH A SHELLFILLED MARL ABOUT TWO TO THREE FEET BELOW THE SANDY TOPSOIL. IT WAS FOUND TO BE SUITED TO OPEN DITCH DRAINAGE. IT ALSO MADE SEEPAGE TYPE IRRIGATION FEASIBLE.

THERE SEEMS TO BE NO RECORD OF HOW LONG THE COLLEGE OPERATED, NOR IS THERE ANY INDICATION AS TO HOW LARGE THE STUDENT BODY BECAME. ONE SOURCE SAID THAT THERE WERE ABOUT 150 STUDENTS AT THE PEAK.

CIVIC ACTIVITY AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS WERE CENTERED AROUND ITS STUDENT BODY AND FACULTY. THERE WERE SINGING GROUPS AND MANY SHAKESPEARIAN PLAYS WERE STAGED AND THERE WAS A BASEBALL TEAM.

THAT SOME OF THE STUDENTS DID GRADUATE WITH A.B. DEGREES IS CERTAIN. PAUL SAID HE RECEIVED A DEGREE IN ENGINEERING.

DON DICKMAN WAS A GOOD BALL PLAYER, AND THE BOYS AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAD A BASEBALL TEAM WHICH PLAYED SUCH PLACES AS RIVERVIEW AND WIMAUMA. I REMEMBER THAT WHEN I LIVED AT LIMONA, WE HAD A BALL TEAM AND FREQUENTLY PLAYED THESE TEAMS ALONG WITH DOVER AND SYDNEY. THE RIVERVIEW TEAM HAD A PITCHER WHO I BELIEVE COULD THROW A BALL AS HARD AS ANY BIG LEAGUER. HIS NAME WAS WALTER PIXTON. HE WAS A LEFT-HANDER AND WON MANY GAMES FOR HIS TEAM. PAUL RECALLED THAT THE RIVERVIEW BOYS USED TO SAY THAT IF THEY COULDN'T BEAT YOU AT BASEBALL, THEY COULD AT FIGHTING, AND WERE ALWAYS EAGER TO PROVE IT.

THE COLLEGE HAD A CARPET SHOP IN CONNECTION WITH ITS OTHER ACTIVITIES AND A LAUNDRY WAS OPERATED BY THE STUDENT BODY.

THERE WAS A NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED AT THAT TIME CALLED THE TRIANGLE.

IN 1918 THE ATLANTIC COAST LINE BUILT A RAILROAD FROM TAMPA TO SARASOTA. WITH THE COMING OF THIS FACILITY, VAST CHANGES IN THE MODES OF TRAVEL AND COMMUNICATIONS TOOK PLACE. BOATS NO LONGER WERE REQUIRED FOR FRIEGHT AND PASSENGER TRAFFIC. A 16 FOOT ASPHALT BLOCK HIGHWAY WAS ALSO COMPLETED TO THE AREA ABOUT THIS TIME. AUTO-MOBILES BEGAN TO BE MORE IN EVIDENCE AND TRUCKS DID MUCH OF THE HAULING.

DON DICKMAN USED TO HAUL TOMATOES TO RUBONIA WITH A MULE TEAM. NOW THEY COULD BE SHIPPED FROM HERE TO THE NORTH DIRECT. THERE WAS STILL NOT MUCH FARMING IN THE RUSKIN AREA, EXCEPT FOR TRUCK SUCH AS PEPPER, SQUASH AND MANY FARMERS PLANTED BEETS, CARROTS AND CABBAGE AND OTHER LEAF CROPS FOR THE TAMPA MARKET. THEY PREPARED THEIR

PRODUCE AT HOME AND HAULED IT TO THE STREETSIDE MARKETS SUCH AS THE AREA ALONG SEVENTH AVENUE NEAR 40TH STREET WHERE THE LATIN PEDDLERS MET THEM AND BARGAINED FOR THEIR WARES WHICH THEY LOADED ON TO THEIR UNIQUE LITTLE HORSE DRAWN WAGONS AND WANDERED UP AND DOWN THE STREETS OF TAMPA AND CRIED THEIR BARGAINS TO THE HOUSEWIVES IN THE LATIN SECTIONS OF THE CITY, THESE PEOPLE MAINTAINED MANY OF THEIR OLD COUNTRY CUSTOMS. THEY WOULD COMPOSE SONGS, NAMING EACH COMMODITY SO THAT THE WHOLE THING WOULD MORE OR LESS RHYME. THEIR FINE MELODIOUS VOICES MADE UP FOR THE SOMEWHAT LUDICROUS PRAISE OF THEIR VARIOUS PRODUCTS.

MANY OF THEM WERE CIGAR MAKERS FROM KEY WEST AND CUBA. THEY BAKED THEIR OWN CUBAN BREAD, STILL DO. SAT IN THEIR QUAIN TITTLE COFFEE SHOPS AND PLAYED DOMINOS WHEN THEY WERE NOT WORKING AT THEIR BENCHES IN THE MANY CIGAR FACTORIES. THE FARMERS USUALLY BEGAN ARRIVING AT THE MEETING PLACE WAY BEFORE DAWN AND THE PEDDLERS WOULD START THEIR BARGAINING AS SOON AS THE PRODUCE WAS UNLOADED AND ARRANGED ON THE CURBING. THE LATINS WERE SHARP BARGAINERS AND MANY FARMERS FOUND THEMSELVES SELLING THEIR STUFF AT TOO LOW PRICES OR HAVING TO TAKE IT BACK HOME WHERE IT WOULD HAVE TO BE DUMPED.

IN LATER YEARS SOME OF THE LATIN PEOPLE GOT TOGETHER AND BUILT A LARGE FARMERS MARKET AT 47TH STREET AND EAST BROADWAY. HERE MORE AND MORE PEOPLE BROUGHT THEIR PRODUCE UNTIL THE PLACE GREW INTO AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE COUNTY ECONOMY. NOW, THERE IS A HUGE FACILITY OVER ON HILLSBOROUGH AVENUE, BUT THE PLACE IS NOW OPERATED BY LARGE BROKERAGE HOUSES AND MUCH OF THE ROMANCE OF THE EARLY DAYS IS GONE. THERE ARE HARDLY ANY MORE OF THE QUAIN TITTLE WAGONS AROUND, HAVING BEEN REPLACED BY SHINY PRODUCE EMPORIUMS ON WHEELS AND EVEN THESE ARE BEING REPLACED BY PALATIAL SUPERMARKETS AND HUGE SHOPPING CENTERS.

ABOUT 1924, FLORIDA BEGAN TO AWAKEN TO THE FACT THAT IT WAS BECOMING A TOURIST STATE. HERETOFORE, ABOUT THE ONLY TOURISM WAS THE WINTER INFLUX OF THE RICH AND NEAR RICH FROM THE LARGE NORTHERN CITIES. THEY HAD BOUGHT UP MUCH OF THE SO-CALLED WORTHLESS LAND IN THE OUTLYING SECTIONS AND SPENT THEIR TIME IN THE CITIES SUCH AS MIAMI, PALM BEACH AND ALONG THE EAST COAST. TAMPA WAS PUT ON THE MAP BY H. B. PLANT

THE MIDDLE CLASS BEGAN COMING IN TO THE AREA SEEKING HOMES AND EMPLOYMENT.

LAND VALUES BEGAN TO CLIMB. KNICKERBOCKERED REAL ESTATE PROMOTERS BEGAN TO BUILD SUBDIVISIONS AND SELL LOTS, ACREAGE, ANYTHING THAT COULD BE CALLED LAND, AND A LOT THAT COULDN'T BECAUSE OF THE WATER COVERING IT! THEY CAME BY THE THOUSANDS. THEY BROUGHT THEIR SALES FORCES, THEIR BUSES, HAULED PROSPECTS FROM ALL OVER THE NATION AND SOLD MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF LOTS ON SUBDIVISIONS THAT WERE NO MORE THAN A BUNCH OF STAKES LAID OUT TO RESEMBLE A TOWN. ELABORATE BROCHURES WERE PRINTED AND LAND WAS SOLD TO BUYERS WHO NEVER SAW IT. SOME OF IT WAS UNDER THREE FEET OF WATER. AS PAUL DICKMAN SAID TO ME, ANYTHING YOU SAID ABOUT THE LAND BUYING CRAZE WHICH SWEEPED THE NATION, LITERALLY, WAS PRETTY APT TO BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

SOME OF THE PEOPLE, LOTS OF THEM, SAME, BOUGHT PROPERTY AND BUILT HOMES. SO SOME OF THE SUBDIVISIONS KEPT THEIR AGREEMENTS AND BUILT STREETS AND HOMES. MANY PEOPLE STAYED BECAUSE THEY HAD INVESTED THEIR LIFE SAVINGS IN THE LAND AND HAD NO CHOICE. OTHERS PUT THEIR TALENTS AND MONEY TO WORK AND PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE.

AT THIS TIME DICKMAN FOUND HIMSELF IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BOOM WITH A LOT OF DESIRABLE LAND ON HIS HANDS. BUT INSTEAD OF PLACING IT ON THE MARKET IN WHOLESALE QUANTITIES, HE CONTINUED TO SELL TO PEOPLE WHO WERE INTERESTED IN SMALL FARMS. HE DID HOWEVER GET INTO THE REAL ESTATE BUSINESS, OPENING AN OFFICE HERE AT RUSKIN AND IN TAMPA. HE DID A BROKERAGE BUSINESS, TRYING TO STICK TO LEGITIMATE SELLING OF ACREAGE TRACTS AND BONA FIDE OPERATIONS.

THEN WHEN THE BUBBLE BURST, AS IT WAS BOUND TO DO, AFTER A YEAR OR TWO OF MADNESS, THE COUNTRY BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT THEY HAD WAY OVERSOLD THE POTENTIAL. THE KNICKERBOCKER BOYS BEGAN TO COPP THEIR BETS. THEY GRABBED WHAT THEY COULD AND GOT OUT, LEAVING OTHERS TO HOLD THE BAG. BY 1927 THE MADNESS CAME FULL CIRCLE. NO ONE COULD PAY FOR THE LAND. NO ONE COULD PAY TAXES. THE STATE HAD TO ISSUE MORATORIUMS ON TAXES. THE MORTGAGE COMPANIES DID THE SAME. 85% OF THE LAND WAS TAKEN OVER BY THE STATE AND COUNTIES FOR UNPAID TAXES. THERE WAS NO MONEY IN THE STATE TREASURY, NO MONEY IN SCHOOL COFFERS. SCHOOLS HAD TO SHORTEN THEIR TERMS TO LESS THAN THE YEAR.

NOW PAUL DICKMAN WAS LONGHEADED ENOUGH TO SEE MUCH OF THIS SITUATION DEVELOPING AND ACTED ACCORDINGLY. BUT ALONG WITH A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE HE FOUND HIMSELF WITH LITTLE MORE THAN A LOT OF LAND ON WHICH TAXES WERE DUE. HIS INCOME HAD DWINDLED TO PROPORTIONS WHICH HE DOES NOT LIKE TO DISCUSS. IN THE END, HE FOUND THAT ALONG WITH SOME OTHER PROPERTY, HE HAD A SMALL RESTAURANT ON THE CORNER OF SHELL POINT ROAD AND THE HIGHWAY. THE FORMER OPERATOR HAD GONE BROKE AND HAD TO GIVE UP THE BUSINESS. PAUL DECIDED TO OPEN THE PLACE WITH A GAS PUMP AND A FEW SOFT DRINKS AND CANDY. HE CONSULTED HIS WIFE ESTHER, AND SHE SAID IF HE WOULD PUT IN THE GAS PUMPS AND SUNDRIES, SHE WOULD GO ALONG AND MAKE PIES AND SANDWICHES TO SELL TO THE EARLY TRUCK TRADE.

PAUL HAD MARRIED ESTHER CRALLE IN 1920 AND THEY HAD ONE SON LYLE, WHO WAS ABOUT FIVE OR SIX YEARS OLD AT THIS TIME.

THE SHELL OIL PEOPLE PUT IN A PUMP, ONE OF THOSE YOU PUMPED THE GAS INTO A BIG GLASS MEASURING TUBE AT THE TOP, WITH THE GALLONAGE MARKED ON IT. IT HELD TEN GALLONS AND YOU SIMPLY WATCHED THE MARKINGS ON THE GLASS FOR THE CORRECT AMOUNT WHICH THE CUSTOMER HAD ORDERED.

ESTHER BAKED THE PIES, MADE THE SANDWICHES, AND PAUL TENDED THE PUMPS AND LOOKED AFTER THE OUTSIDE. HE SAID THEY GOT UP BEFORE DAYLIGHT IN ORDER TO BE READY FOR THE TRUCK TRADE. HE SAID NO ONE WAS MORE SURPRISED THAN HE, WHEN THE PLACE ACTUALLY BEGAN TO MAKE MONEY.

FINDING TIME ON HIS HANDS, HE BEGAN TO PLANT SOME STUFF ON A THREE ACRE PLOT WHICH HE HAD UP THE ROAD. CUCUMBERS AND PEPPER SEEMED TO BE A GOOD CROP, SO THIS IS WHAT HE PLANTED. THE NEXT YEAR, HE PLANTED ABOUT ELEVEN ACRES OF STUFF. I HAVE BEEN TOLD MANY TIMES THAT HE WOULD COME IN FROM THE FIELD AND HELP ESTHER WITH THE DAYS ACCUMULATION OF DISHES. ESTHER HIRED MARY WILLIS TO HELP HER AND PAUL WAS ABLE TO GIVE HIS TIME TO THE FARM.

IN 1934 HE BUILT THE BUILDING WHICH PRESENTLY HOUSES THE "COFFEE CUP", A NAME WHICH HAS BEEN USED FOR THE PLACE SINCE THE BEGINNING.

ABOUT 1933 HE SOLD THE STORE TO JACK WINN WHO OPERATED IT TILL 1942. MARY WILLIS, WHO HAD AS WE SAID BEEN WORKING FOR ESTHER, LEFT WINN AND CAME TO THE RIVER TO WORK FOR HER BROTHER HENRY WHO HAD OPENED THE OLD JOHN MCCAIN RESTAURANT. SHE DID NOT STAY THERE HOWEVER, BUT CAME BACK TO THE COFFEE CUP AND WORKED FOR JACK WINN TILL SHE WAS ABLE TO BUY THE BUSINESS WHEN JACK DECIDED TO SELL. HERE SHE MARRIED WILLIE WALKER WHO WAS A CLERK FOR WINN. SHE AND WILLIE STILL OPERATE THE PLACE. IT IS STILL "THE COFFEE CUP", AND ~~THE~~ ^{IT} IS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR PLACES ALONG THE HIGHWAY.

IT WAS ABOUT 1934 OR 5 THAT TOMATO FARMING REALLY BEGAN TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE ECONOMY OF THE AREA. ED McLAIN AT SUN CITY, HAD BEEN GROWING AND SHIPPING TOMATOES FROM SUN CITY FIVE MILES TO THE SOUTH, FOR MANY YEARS. CHICK WILLIS WAS DOING PRETTY GOOD AT IT AS EARLY AS 1928.

THE MANATEE FRUIT COMPANY WAS OPERATING SEVERAL TOMATO PACKING HOUSES IN MANATEE COUNTY AT THAT TIME. PAUL WENT TO THE MANATEE OPERATORS AND PERSUADED THEM TO MOVE ONE OF THEIR HOUSES TO RUSKIN, ALTHO HE COULD ONLY PROMISE THEM ABOUT 75 ACRES OF LAND SUITABLE FOR GROWING TOMATOES. THEY AGREED TO COME IN AND BUILT A HOUSE AT THE RAILROAD CROSSING AT THE WIMAUMA ROAD. THIS HOUSE BURNED IN '37-8. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THERE WAS EVER A TOMATO PACKINGHOUSE AT THIS SPOT NOW. THEY USED THIS HOUSE FOR SEVERAL YEARS, TILL THE LARGE NEW FACILITY WAS BUILT AT APOLLO BEACH ABOUT 1938 OR 8.

THE NEW FACILITY WAS KNOWN AS THE RUSKIN CO-OP AND PAUL WAS ACTIVE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF IT TILL ABOUT 1945 OR 6. HE THEN PULLED OUT OF THE CO-OP AND BEGAN TO PACK HIS FRUIT IN THE RUSKIN DEPOT WHERE HE HAD BUILT AN ADDITION AND PUT IN MODERN MACHINERY.

ABOUT 1946 HE BEGAN TO EXPERIEMTN WITH PREPACKAGING SUCH ITEMS AS FRESH SWEET CORN, SLAW, COMPOSED OF CABBAGE AND OTHER GREEN SALAD INGREDIENTS. THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HAD BEEN CONDUCTING A RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR MANY YEARS, AND DICKMAN BEGAN TO REALIZE THAT ABOUT 70% OF THE PRODUCE SHIPPED TO NORTHERN MARKETS WAS WASTE

AS A RESULT OF THE WRONG TYPE OF PACKAGING. HE BEGAN TO PICK CORN AND PULL OFF THE HUSKS, DOWN TO THE BARE EAR. THIS MADE IT POSSIBLE TO SHIP ONLY THE FANCY STUFF TO DISTANT MARKETS, LEAVING THE LESS DESIRABLE EARS TO BE USED FOR LOCAL RESTAURANT AND HOTEL TRADE. IT WAS FOUND THAT CORN LOSES MUCH OF ITS NATURAL SUGAR CONTENT WHEN ALLOWED TO REMAIN ON THE STALK TILL THE SUN GETS HOT, SO THEY PICKED THE CORN AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE IN THE MORNING, AND RUSHED IT TO THE GRADING BELTS WHERE IT WAS SHUCKED AND PREPARED FOR THE REFRIGERATOR TRUCKS. FROM THE TIME IT LEFT THE FIELD TILL IT WAS READY FOR THE TABLE, IT WAS NEVER ALLOWED TO GET WARM. EVEN THE STORES PLACED IT IN THEIR REFRIGERATED CASES. THIS METHOD RESULTED IN A PRODUCT SO FAR SUPERIOR TO THE OLD WORM EATEN UNSHUCKED PRODUCT, THAT HE SOON HAD MORE BUSINESS THAN HE COULD MANAGE. OTHER VEGETABLES WERE PREPARED IN SIMILAR FASHION, AND KITCHEN READY VEGETABLES REALLY BEGAN TO BE POPULAR.

ANY HOUSEWIFE KNOWS NOW THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PICK UP KITCHEN READY PRODUCE AT ANY SUPER-MARKET.

PAUL DICKMAN IS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS NEW METHOD OF PROCESSING. PROBABLY THE MOST DRAMATIC DEVELOPMENT WAS IN THE SWEET CORN.

WITH THE NEW METHOD CAME THE PROBLEM OF WHAT TO DO WITH THE WASTE CORN AND GREENS TRIMMINGS. HERE PAUL THOUGHT HE HAD THE ANSWER BY FEEDING THIS TO STOCK. HE BOUGHT 300 HEAD OF HOGS AND SOME CATTLE, AND STARTED TO FEED THEM THE WASTE CABBAGE LEAVES AND OTHER REFUSE. THIS PROVED TO BE NOT PROFITABLE, SINCE THE HOGS DID NOT TAKE TO THE GREENS. HE SOON DISPOSED OF THEM, BUT THE CATTLE GOT ALONG VERY WELL ON THE CORN SHUCKS AND OTHER WASTE.

WHEN THE PREPACK BEGAN TO TAKE UP SO MUCH OF THEIR TIME, LYLE HAD BY NOW FINISHED HIS COLLEGE TRAINING AND ARMY SERVICE, AND HAD BEGUN TO TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DICKMAN ENTERPRISES. THEY QUIT GROWING TOMATOES. THEY HAD ABOUT 1500 ACRES IN CULTIVATION BY THIS TIME. PAUL DECIDED THAT TOMATO GROWING WAS TOO EXPENSIVE, AND SAW A GOOD POTENTIAL IN THE PREPACK. ESPECIALLY IN THE CORN. SO THEY CLEARED/NEW LAND AND PLANTED LARGE ACRES OF CORN AND LEAF CROPS. THEY HAD ESTABLISHED A HOUSING FACILITY FOR THEIR PERMANENT HELP AND HIRED OUTSIDE HELP FOR THE HARVESTING AND PRESERVATION. MUCH OF THE OLD TOMATO LAND WAS CONVERTED TO COW PASTURE AND

THEY BEGAN TO BUILD A HERD OF WHITE FACE CATTLE.

ON OTHER PORTIONS, THEY BEGAN EXPERIMENTING WITH A NEW TYPE OF LEMON. FROM A SMALL PLANTING, THEY BEGAN TO EXPAND THIS OPERATION. THE NEW VARIETY OF LEMON WAS BROUGHT TO THIS COUNTRY BY A MAN WHO HAD SPENT SOME TIME IN CHINA AND HAD BROUGHT SOME OF THE SEED OR SOME CUTTINGS FROM THERE. IT IS LARGE, MUCH LARGER THAN THE CALIFORNIA LEMON AND CONTAINS ABOUT THREE TIMES AS MUCH JUICE AS THE SMALLER CALIFORNIA TYPE. IT WAS CALLED THE MEYER LEMON.

IT COULD NOT BE SUCCESSFULLY SHIPPED FRESH SINCE IT HAD TOO THIN A SKIN, WOULD NOT STAND THE HANDLING. SO IT HAD A LIMITED POTENTIAL TIL THE DISCOVERY OF THE CONCENTRATE PROCESS, WHEREBY THE JUICE COULD BE EXTRACTED AND STORED FOR FUTURE USE. WHEN THE METHOD WAS PERFECTED, THE DEMAND FOR THE NEW FRUIT FOR JUICE BEGAN TO TAKE UP THE SUPPLY. DICKMAN MADE CONTACTS WITH SUCH USERS AS KARFT FOODS AND OTHERS, WHERE HE WAS ABLE TO ARRANGE FOR THE SALE OF HIS PRODUCT. AS THE DEMAND INCREASED HE EXPANDED HIS PLANTINGS TILL HE HAD ABOUT 300 ACRES IN BEARING TREES. OTHER FARMERS BEGAN TO NOTICE THIS AND THEY BEGAN TO PLANT THE NEW LEMON ON LAND THAT WAS NO LONGER SUITABLE FOR CROP GROWING. AT THIS WRITING THERE ARE ABOUT 1500 ACRES OF THE FRUIT IN THE SOUTH HILLSBOROUGH AND NORTH MANATEE COUNTY AREAS.

THE TREES ARE GROWN BY ROOTING THE CUTTINGS IN SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPLANTING THEM TO THE FIELDS AS SOON AS THEY ARE BIG ENOUGH TO GROW UNDER FIELD CONDITIONS. THEY BEGIN TO BEAR IN ABOUT A YEAR AND BY THE TIME THEY ARE THREE YEARS OLD THEY ARE PRODUCING ENOUGH FRUIT TO PAY THEIR OWN WAY. THEY ARE EXTREMELY SUSCEPTIBLE TO COLD AND THE RUSKIN AREA AND NORTHERN MANATEE COUNTY, BECAUSE OF THEIR SOIL AND PROXIMITY TO THE WARM WATERS OF TAMPA BAY, HAVE PROVEN IDEAL FOR THE GROWTH OF THE FRUIT. THE FRUIT, AS WE HAVE SAID, IS VERY TENDER AND MUST BE HANDLED CAREFULLY TO INSURE ITS JUICE CONTENT.

THE PREPACK OPERATION REQUIRED THE SERVICES OF A SALES ORGANIZATION, AND THE DICKMANS ORGANIZED THEIR OWN WITH A MAN BY THE NAME OF CARNEY TAYLOR TO HEAD THE STAFF. TAYLOR STAYED WITH THE FIRM FOR SEVERAL YEARS. HE WAS SUCCEEDED BY

WENDELL SMITH A YOUNG UNIVERSITY GRADUATE WHO WENT TO WORK FOR THE FIRM UPON RECEIVING HIS DEGREE FROM COLLEGE. AT THIS WRITING, HE IS STILL WITH THEM AS A COORDINATOR OF VARIOUS ENTERPRISES IN WHICH THEY HAVE ENGAGED IN RECENT YEARS.

ALTHOUGH THE PREPACKING BUSINESS WAS GOING WELL AND MAKING MONEY, PAUL WANTED TO CURTAIL SOME OF HIS BUSINESSS ACTIVITIES AND TAKE A WELL EARNED VACATION FROM THE KILLING PACE HE HAD SET FOR HIMSELF. I WOULD JUDGE FROM OBSERVING PAUL DICKMAN'S ACTIVITIES OVER A NUMBER OF YEARS, THAT HE WAS A MAN WHO FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY. ANY ACTIVITY IN WHICH HE TOOK PART, HE HAD TO PERSONALLY SUPERVISE MUCH OF THE DETAIL, THEREFORE HE FOUND HIMSELF PERHAPS, PHYSICALLY OVEREXTENDED, SO THAT HE DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR ALL OF THE VARIOUS PROJECTS IN WHICH HE WAS INVOLVED.

OF COURSE, LYLE HAD BY THIS TIME TAKEN UP MUCH OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OPERATION OF THE SEVERAL PROJECTS, BUT SINCE PAUL HAD OPERATED ON HIS OWN FOR SO LONG HE FELT THAT THE BUSINESS NEEDED HIM RIGHT ON. HOWEVER HE DECIDED TO SELL THE PREPACK.

IN 1952 HE BECAME INVOLVED IN A PROJECT TO DREDGE OUT THE INLET SO THAT A NAVIGABLE CHANNEL COULD BE OBTAINED FOR SMALL BOATS ALL THE WAY UP TO THE HEART OF TOWN. HERETOFORE THE INLET WAS JUST A MARSHY BAYOU, WITH LITTLE WATER BUT A LOT OF MUD AND SAWGRASS, AN UNSIGHTLY STREAM AT BEST. IT FLOWED RIGHT THROUGH THE HEART OF RUSKIN, BUT ONLY PROVIDED DRAINAGE, SINCE BOATS OF ANY SIZE HAD DIFFICULTY NEGOTIATING ITS SAND BARS, EXCEPT AT HIGH TIDE.

YEARS BEFORE, THE DICKMANS HAD TRIED TO GET THIS PROJECT UNDER WAY. THEY HAD BOUGHT A SMALL DREDGE WHICH PROVED WORTHLESS, AND THEY HAD TO ABANDON THE WORK DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS. IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN A DREAM OF PAUL'S TO MAKE THE PLACE MORE ATTRACTIVE AND USABLE, BUT IT WAS NOT UNTIL ABOUT 1952 THAT HE GOT STARTED ON IT.

NOW THE INLET AREA HAD FOR MANY YEARS BEEN THE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONGOOD SOCIETY, A SORT OF COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP. THERE WAS A 60 FOOT BOULEVARD WHICH FOLLOWED THE CONTOUR OF THE STREAM FROM THE HIGHWAY. OR RATHER ABOVE THE HIGHWAY.

ON BOTH SIDES TO THE MAIN REIVER, A DISTANCE OF ABOUT TWO MILES. THERE WILL BE MORE ABOUT THE COMMONGOOD SOCIETY LATER. ANYHOW, DICKMAN MADE A DEAL WITH THE SOCIETY TO DREDGE THE CHANNEL TO A DEPTH OF SIX FEET IF THE LAND LYING WITHIN THE MAIN TIDAL AREA WHICH HE PROPOSED TO COVER WITH THE SOIL FROM THE DREDGING AND WHICH WOULD RESULT IN SOME CHOICE WATERFORNT PROPERTY, BE DEEDED TO HIM. THIS THIS ARRANGEMENT WAS AGREED TO AND THE DREDGING BEGAN IN 1952. A BASIN WAS DUG AT THE HIGHWAY AND A SIX FOOT CHANNEL MORE OR LESS FOLLOWING THE OLD MEANDERING COURSE OF THE STREAM, ALONG WITH SOME SIDE CHANNELS WHICH WERE PROVIDED SO AS TO MAKE ALL THE LOTS FRONT ON SOME PORTION OF THE DEEP WATER.

THE BOULEVARD RIGHT OF WAY WAS TO BE LEFT INTACT, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A DRIVEWAY ON EITHER SIDE OF THE WATERWAY.

THE RESULTING LAND FILL BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH BOULEVARD RIGHTS OF WAY, AND THE WATERWAY CHANNEL PROVIDED ABOUT 200 BUILDING LOTS, ON WHICH STREETS WERE LAID OUT AND THE BUILDING SITES WERE PLACED ON THE MARKET, SOME OF THE LOTSX WITH HOMES ALREADY BUILT. MOST OF THE HOUSES WERE IN THE \$15,000 TO \$20,000 CLASS. I DONT KNOW HOW MANY WERE BUILT BY THE DICKMANS BUT THERE WERE MAYBE 20. THE REST OF THE LOTS WERE OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC AT RR PRICES AROUND \$6 TO \$8000. THEY WERE SPACIOUS ENOUGH FOR ANY TYPE OF HOME THE OWNER MIGHT CARE TO BUILD, AND AS WE SAID, THEY ALL HAD DEEP WATER ON ONE SIDE. SEVERAL MORE HOMES WERE BUILT IN LATER MONTHS BY PURCHASERS OF THE LOTS. THE OLD INLET AREA HAS CERTAINLY IMPROVED ITS LOOKS AND USEFULNESS SINCE IT IS NOW POSSIBLE TO BRING GOOD SIZED YACHTS RIGHT UP INTO THE TOWN.

BY NOW DICKMAN HAD SOLD THE PREPACK OPERATION TO A TAMPA LAWYER, AND HAD TRAVELED ABOUT THE WORLD WITH THE PANAMERICAN COMMISSION, OF WHICH HE WAS A MEMBER. HE PHOTOGRAPHED MANY INTERESTING PLACES AND BROUGHT BACK SLIDES WHICH HE HAS FROM TIME TO TIME EXHIBITED TO VARIOUS GROUPS AROUND THE COUNTY.

IN 1956 HE BEGAN THE REALIZATION OF ANOTHER DREAM. AS A BOY HE HAD SAILED THE WATERS OF TAMPA BAY ON THE OLD KILKARE, ACTING AS ENGINEER FOR HIS FATHER. HE HAD OBSERVED THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE CURVING COAST LINE OF THE BAY JUST TO

THE NORTH OF THE LITTLE MANATEE RIVER. HE OFTEN THOUGHT WHAT A BEAUTIFUL PLACE FOR A BEACH AND FOR WATERFRONT HOMESITES. THEN IT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN A TIDAL FLAT ABOUT THREE MILES LONG, REACHING UP TO MANGROVE POINT, A SPIT OF MANGROVE COVERED LAND JUTTING OUT INTO THE BAY. HE COULD ENVISION HOWEVER WHAT CHANGES COULD BE MADE WITH THE DREDGING OF THE FLATS AND THE BUILDING UP OF THE LOWLYING LAND ALONG THE SHORE.

THIS LAND DID NOT BELONG TO HIM, BUT HE WENT ABOUT BUYING IT. MOST OF IT WAS UNDER TIDE WATER, AND WAS INTERSPERSED WITH SHALLOW CREEKS AND BAYOUS FOR SEVERAL MILES BACK FROM THE SHORE LINE. IN THAT CONDITION IT WAS OF NO VALUE EXCEPT AS A FEEDING GROUND FOR FISH AND RACCOONS, ALONG WITH THE MILLIONS OF FIDDLERS AND SANDFLIES. COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN USED IT A GOOD DEAL, AS IT PROVIDED IDEAL CONDITIONS FOR STOPNETTING MULLET.

WHEN DICKMAN STARTED THE DREDGING, HE AT FIRST DUG A WIDE DEEP CHANNEL BACK INTO THE FLATS ABOUT A MILE. HE PUMPED THE SPOIL ONTO THE FLATS AND BEGAN TO BUILD SOME MORE HIGH GROUND WHICH IN THE FUTURE WAS TO PROVIDE HOMESEEKERS WITH THE ADVANTAGES OF WATERFRONT OWNERSHIP.

AT THE UPPER END OF THE DREDGED CHANNEL HE DUG A BASIN AND BUILT SEVERAL COVERED SLIPS FOR HIS BOAT AND THOSE OF A FEW FRIENDS. AS YET HE HAD BUILT ONLY A GRADED ROAD FROM THE SHELL POINT ROAD TO THE AREA. IT CROSSED A CANAL ON RATHER SHAKY BRIDGE AND PROVIDED ACCESS TO THE MARINA. BEYOND THIS POINT IT SIMPLY PLAYED OUT INTO THE SANDY FILL. AS SOON AS PEOPLE DISCOVERED THE FILL, THEY BEGAN TO TRY TO GET TO THE BAY FROM THIS POINT.

HE HASTILY GRADED UP A ROAD OF SORTS TO THE BEACH AREA, WHICH BY NOW HE HAD BEGUN TO DEVELOP INTO A SEMBLANCE OF A BEACH, ALTHOUGH NOT NEARLY READY FOR ANY TYPE OF OPERATION. PEOPLE KEPT GOING INTO THE AREA AND GETTING STUCK IN THE SOFT SAND. OTHER BOATMEN FOUND OUT ABOUT THE MARINA AND THE DEMAND FOR PARKING SLIPS AND STORAGE FOR PLEASURE BOATS BECAME SO INSISTENT THAT HE FOUND IT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE MORE SLIPS AND GAS FACILITIES, ALONG WITH A LIFT FOR THE HAULING OF BOATS. HE HAD HIRED A MAN TO RUN THE PLACE AND HAD BUILT A SHOP

MEAN TIME THE BEACH AREA WAS PROVIDED WITH A SUITABLE ROAD AND A SMALL REFRESHMENT BUILDING AND SOME BATHING FACILITIES WERE INSTALLED. THE PLACE PROVED SO POPULAR THAT HE BUILT A BOATEL-MOTEL ALONG SIDE OF THE CHANNEL, AND A RESTAURANT, CATERING TO THE BOATING TRADE FROM THE NEIGHBORING CITIES OF ST. PETERSBURG AND TAMPA, AND TOWNS TO THE SOUTH.

IN THE WINTER, THE NEWLY DREDGED CANALS BEGAN TO BE POPULAR PLACES FOR THE BANK FISHERMEN AND FABULOUS CATCHES OF REDFISH AND TROUT, ALONG WITH MANY SNOOK AND OTHER SPECIES WERE BEING MADE. HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE COULD BE SEEN ON ANY GIVEN DAY STANDING ALONG THE STEEP BANKS PULLING IN FISH OF EVERY TYPE. THIS WAS ESPECIALLY TRUE WHEN THE WEATHER WAS EXTREMELY COLD AND THE TIDE WAS LOW. THEY BUILT A DOCK IN FRONT OF THE RESTAURANT FOR VISITING BOATS AND FISHERMEN. SINCE ALL OF THE AREA WAS PRIVATE PROPERTY HE COULD HAVE AT ANY TIME CLOSED THE AREA TO FISHERMEN, BUT HE CHOSE TO LEAVE THE PUBLIC FREE TO USE THE FACILITY, EVEN TO PROVIDING MEN AND TRUCKS TO KEEP THE AREA CLEAN. I MUST SAY HOWEVER, THAT PEOPLE GENERALLY RESPECTED HIS GENEROSITY BY BEING CAREFUL WITH TRASH AND REFUSE. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE MOTEL AND A SMALL APARTMENT HOUSE, THERE HAVE BEEN NO DWELLING PLACES BUILT ON THE PROPERTY, EXCEPT THE SERVICE AREAS AND DICKMAN'S OWN HOME ON THE UPPER END OF THE ORIGINAL BEACH. HE HAS NOT AS YET PLACED ANY OF THE BUILDING LOTS ON THE ACTIVE MARKET, PREFERRING TO ATTRACT INVESTORS IN APARTMENT BUILDINGS AND BUSINESS PLACES. AT SOME FUTURE DATE, PLANS TO OFFER HOMEBUILDING SITES TO THE PUBLIC ARE CONTEMPLATED.

BY NOW THE DICKMANS, FATHER AND SON HAD COMPLETELY DIVORCED THEMSELVES FROM ROW CROP FARMING. THEY HAD CONVERTED ALL OF THE OLD TOMATO LANDS, SOME 1500 ACRES AND SEVERAL HUNDRED MORE ACRES OF THE LOW GROUND ALONG THE BAY TO PASTURE LANDS. MUCH OF IT IS IMPROVED AND PLANTED TO REGULAR PASTURE GRASSES AND IS SUPPORTING SEVERAL HUNDRED PURE BRED HEREFORDS AND SOME BRAHMAS. THEY HAVE OF COURSE KEPT THE LEMON GROVES ALONG WITH SOME CITRUS PLANTINGS. ABOUT 1959 OR 1960 THEY SET ASIDE 1000 ACRES OF WILD LAND ALONG THE UPPER REACHES OF THE LITTLE MANATEE RIVER FOR

BIRDS. THE NATIVE WAIL ALONG WITH THE RING NECKED PHEASANT AND THE CHUKKAR WERE USED. THE NATURAL COVER AND NATIVE SHRUBBERY MADE IT IDEAL FOR HUNTING THESE BIRDS. SOME PLANTINGS OF SEED GRAINS WERE PLACED STRATEGICALLY. PENS WERE BUILT FOR SURPLUS STOCK WHICH WAS PLACED IN THE WOODS WHEN NEEDED, ASSURING THE HUNTER OF PLENTY OF BIRDS TO SHOOT. THEY HIRED A MAN TO RUN THE PLACE. THEY WERE FORTUNATE IN GETTING A MAN WHO WAS A NATURAL WOODSMAN AND HAD HAD EXPERIENCE IN THE TYPE OF OPERATION THEY HAD IN MIND. BILL BALSLEY AND HIS WIFE BETTY TOOK OVER AND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY THE PLACE BECAME POPULAR WITH THE SPORTSMEN WHO CAME TO THE AREA EACH WINTER FOR SOME SHOOTING.

BILL WAS A GOOD DOG TRAINER AND A GOOD DIPLOMAT AND WHEN SOME CELEBRITY WISHED TO HUNT WITHOUT BEING DISTURBED HE COULD COUNT ON ALL THE PRIVACY HE WANTED. MANY OF THEM CAN AND WENT AWAY IN HIGH PRAISE OF THE MANAGEMENT.

IN 1965 ANOTHER MOTEL WAS ADDED TO THE FIRST UNIT. THIS ONE WAS EQUIPPED WITH HOUSEKEEPING APARTMENTS AND SEEMED LIKELY TO BECOME POPULAR WITH MORE LOCAL VACATIONEERS ON A YEAR ROUND BASIS.

FOR HIS OWN PLEASURE, PAUL BOUGHT A FINE CABIN CRUISER AND SPENT HIS LEISURE HOURS FISHING FOR DEEP SEA FISH IN THE GULF. HE ALSO CHARTERED THE BOAT TO PARTIES AND HAD A RELIABLE GUIDE IN THE PERSON OF CAPTAIN CLARENCE HOLMAN, A LOCAL BOY WHOM HE TRAINED TO CARE FOR THE BOAT AND WHO BECAME QUITE EXPERT IN GUIDING PEOPLE TO THE BEST MACKEREL AND KING FISHING IN THE NEARBY GULF WATERS. ONCE WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT I KNEW WHERE SOME CLAMS WERE, HE SAID COME AND SHOW ME, SO WE WENT DOWN TO BISHOPS HARBOUR WHERE I HAD OBTAINED CLAMS SEVERAL YEARS BEFORE. LUCKILY WE PUT THE SMALL BOAT OVERBOARD NOT TWO HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE BEST CLAM BAR I HAD EVER SEEN. WE PICKED UP A HUNDRED CLAMS IN A FEW MINUTES. I BRAGGED ABOUT MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE CLAM BARS AND PAUL SAID THAT I WAS JUST LUCKY. I NEVER DID ADMIT THAT IT WAS PURE LUCK THAT WE FOUND THEM!

PAUL HAD LITTLE PATIENCE WITH POLITICIANS, BUT DID ACCEPT THE POSITION OF BUDGET BOARD MEMBER, AN ELECTIVE OFFICE. HE HAD ALWAYS BELIEVED IN GETTING A

DOLLARS WORTH FOR A COLLAR SO HE WAS QUITE EFFECTIVE IN HOLDING DOWN IRRESPONSIBLE SPENDING OF TAX FUNDS.

PAUL AND ESTHER DICKMAN HAD ONLY ONE CHILD. HE WAS BORN IN 1920, AND HIS NAME IS LYLE. HE WENT TO THE COUNTY SCHOOLS AND RECEIVED HIS HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION AT WIMAUMA HIGH SCHOOL. I RECALL HIS HIGH SCHOOL DAYS VERY WELL, SINCE HE RODE THE BUS WHICH I WAS DRIVING FROM RUSKIN TO WIMAUMA DURING THE ENTIRE THREE YEARS I WAS DRIVING. SOME OF HIS COMPANIONS WERE HARRY MOLZ, WHOM I WAS SURE WOULD MAKE THE CHAIN GANG BEFORE HE WAS 21, BUT DIDNT! THERE WAS ROBERT COUNCIL, JOE BORAICO, LAWTON IRVINE, AND SEVERAL MORE THAT I CANT RECALL. LYLE WAS WELL BEHAVED ON THE BUS, SO WAS JOE BORAICO, AND MOST OF THE OTHERS. HARRY MOLZ WHO TURNED OUT TO BE A HIGHLY RESPECTED SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, WAS THE ONLY ONE I WAS UNCERTAIN ABOUT. HE WASN'T MEAN, JUST FULL OF MISCHIEF I GUESS. HE MADE LIFE PRETTY MISERABLE FOR ME. NOW HE IS ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS.

THERE WERE PROBABLY SOME ESCAPADES IN WHICH LYLE WAS INVOLVED, BUT I CANT PIN ANYTHING SPECIFIC ON HIM.

HE WENT ON FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA AND GRADUATED FROM THERE IN 1942 WITH A DEGREE IN SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURE. THIS WAS A NATURAL THING SINCE HE WAS MOST SURELY GOING TO BE INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURAL PURSUITS. HE SERVED IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC, FROM THE TIME OF HIS GRADUATION TILL THE WAR WAS OVER, OR ABOUT 3½ YEARS. HE WAS DISCHARGED AS A CAPTAIN OF INFANTRY.

IN 1946 HE MARRIED MISS MARGARET RAY OF ROME, GEORGIA, AND CAME HOME TO RUSKIN TO GET ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF LEARNING TO MANAGE A VAST ENTERPRISE CONSISTING OF AGRICULTURE AND MANY OTHER PROJECTS. THE ENSUING YEARS SAW HIM GRADUALLY ASSUMING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DICKMAN EMPIRE. IN THE COURSE OF EVENTS, HE BECAME THE FATHER OF THREE BOYS. THERE MUST HAVE BEEN INTERVALS DURING THESE YEARS OF HIS GROWING UP THAT LYLE DICKMAN HAD SOME DISTURBING THOUGHTS ABOUT THE IMPORTANT PLACE HE WAS DESTINED TO PLAY IN THE AFFAIRS OF HIS FATHER'S BUSINESS. IF THIS IS SO, I DONT BELIEVE ANYONE EVERY DETECTED IT.

HE SEEMED TO JUST GROW INTO THE NICHE FOR WHICH HE HAD BEEN PREPARED. I HAVE A TREMENDOUS ADMIRATION FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH HIS PARENTS MUST HAVE TRAINED HIM. THEY DID A REMARKABLE JOB, AND HE IS A REMARKABLE MAN. HIS THREE BOYS ARE NOT BEING TRAINED IN THE SAME MANNER, AND FOR THE TASK OF ASSUMING CONTROL OF A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE ECONOMY OF THE SOUTH COUNTY AREA.

RUSKIN OWES MUCH TO THESE MEN OF VISION AND FAITH IN THE FUTURE.

IN THE EARLY 60'S, PAUL DICKMAN FELT THAT THE TOWN SHOULD HAVE A BANK. GROWTH IN THE AREA HAD BEEN PHENOMENAL AND MANY NEW BUSINESSES HAD MOVED INTO THE COMMUNITY. RUSKIN WAS TAKING ON THE APPEARANCE OF A TOWN. THE HIGHWAY WAS FOUR LANED FROM TAMPA TO THE COUNTY LINE, AND SIDE WALKS WERE BUILT. A NEW RIVER BRIDGE WAS BUILT AND MEDIAN STRIPS WERE LANDSCAPED. THE BANK BECAME A REALITY WHEN SEVERAL TAMPA AND BRADENTON BANKERS OFFERED TO UNDERWRITE THE ORIGINAL STOCK ISSUE. HOWEVER, THEY NEVER HAD TO DO MUCH UNDERWRITING. WHEN THE STOCK WAS OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC, IT WAS SNAPPED UP SO FAST THAT LITTLE OUTSIDE FINANCING WAS REQUIRED. FROM THE FIRST DAY IT OPENED, IT WAS APPARENT THAT ITS SUCCESS WAS ASSURED. ITS PHENOMENAL GROWTH IS A MATTER OF RECORD.

ABOUT THE SAME TIME THE BANK WAS BUILT, A LARGE PLAZA WAS LAID OUT AND A SUPERMARKET WAS OPENED BY A MAN NAMED JAEB, WHO HAD TWO OR THREE OTHER PLACES ABOUT THE STATE.

JOE ELLIOTT, A LOCAL DRUGGIST, JOINED THE REXALL CHAIN AND A LARGE DRUG COMPLEX WAS BUILT AND OPENED FOR BUSINESS. A NEW POST OFFICE WAS PLACED IN THE PLAZA AND A DEPARTMENT STORE FOLLOWED. PLANS FOR A HARDWARE STORE ARE BEING CONTEMPLATED (IT WAS COMPLETED IN 1965) BY MAYNARD CLARK AND ASSOCIATES. CLARK OPERATES A HARDWARE AND APPLIANCE AND FURNITURE STORE AT THE CORNER OF WIMAUMA ROAD AND U. S. 41. HE IS ALSO INTERESTED IN THE DEPARTMENT STORE. (ALL OF THESE BUSINESSES HAVE BEEN LOCATED NOW IN 1967 IN THE RUSKIN PLAZA).

NEW FILLING STATIONS BEGAN TO APPEAR ALONG THE MAIN STREET. HENRY WILLIS HAD BUILT A STANDARD STATION AT SHELL POINT ROAD, AND HIGHWAY 41. HE ALSO HAD A

GROCERY STORE ON THE OTHER CORNER WHICH WAS LEASED TO RALPH LAMBERT. ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER WAS THE DICKMAN BUILDING WHERE THE DICKMAN ENTERPRISES HAD THEIR OFFICES. IN THE SAME BUILDING, ON THE CORNER, TAMPA FEDERAL HAS A BANK. THE COFFEE CUP, LONG A LANDMARK, STANDS ON THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION. MANY OTHER BUSINESSES HAVE SPRUNG UP ALL ALONG THE STREET. THERE IS A SHELL STATION AT THE CORNER OF THE HIGHWAY AND FOURTH AVENUE, AND ACROSS THE STREET IS A PURE OIL COMPLEX AND AUTOMOBILE AGENCY. THERE IS A TEXACO STATION ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE WIMAUMA ROAD AND 41. J. D. SMITH HAS A GULF STATION AND GARAGE ON THE NEXT CORNER, AND RAY DUNKEL HAS A WELL STOCKED CAR LOT ACROSS THE STREET FROM SMITH. LYLE DICKMAN LIVES IN A LARGE OLD HOUSE WHICH USED TO BELONG TO HIS GREAT UNCLE. HIS ORIGINAL HOME IS ACROSS THE STREET AND IS NOW RENTED TO JOE BORAICO, LIFE LONG FRIEND AND SON OF A FORMER MERCHANT. JOE IS IN BUSINESS WITH MAYNARD CLARK, IN HARDWARE. HIS FAMILY WILL BE DEALT WITH IN SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS.

THIS IS THE WAY IT WAS IN 1965. TWO OTHER PLACES OF NOTE ARE THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUILDING, AND GEORGE CASTELLO'S STORE JUST SOUTH OF THE INLET. AT THIS TIME THERE IS BEING BUILT, A HANDSOME NEW LIBRARY ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE HIGHWAY AT THE INLET. THIS FACILITY IS THE RESULT OF LONG YEARS OF PLANNING AND EFFORT BY THE LOCAL WOMANS CLUB AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS ALONG WITH HELP FROM THE COUNTY. A NEW FIRE HOUSE STANDS JUST OFF THE HIGHWAY ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE INLET, AND IS A PRODUCT OF MANY DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN OF THE AREA.
