

# Florida Real Estate Boom Dazzles Duke Ellis; Tourists Crowd State

Editor's forward: This is the third of a series of letters written by Ralph "Duke" Ellis, local man, wintering in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Dear Friends, I told you in my last letter that one of these days I was going to write to you about St. Petersburg, and especially about the real estate business down here, but gosh all Friday, the more I see and hear about it, the bigger the job looks, and I hardly know where to begin, and after I do begin, I'll be darned if I know where I will end. I have been in and around here now for the last three weeks, just loafing around taking in the sights and basking in the sunshine, and every time I would read in the papers about the weather you folk are having up north, I would go out and bask again.

Well to begin with, the whole state of Florida is in the throes of a wonderful boom. A few years ago when anybody thought of Florida, all they thought was down there was Miami and Palm Beach where nobody could go unless the old man was a politician or had struck oil, but since the war there seems to be so doggone many who want to give their money away, and these Floridians are good takers, that each year sees an increasing flow of Cadillac and Pierce Arrow owners come down here to acquire a coat of tan play golf bath and show off, to say nothing of the flow of divers whose owners come down to eat oranges and play horseback.

Hotels Going Up Fast. It will be three years in March since I was here, and at that time on my return north I told every one who would lend me an ear that I thought Florida was a coming state. I hate to say I told you so, but she sure is a coming at a sixty mile an hour gait and the next legislature is already talking of establishing a quota for this coming year. So if you are on the think about coming down here, hurry before the quota is closed. There were one large hotel under way, that is, the steel work was up in the air. I guess the promoters were as at that particular time as they are now. Today, in addition to that hotel being finished there are two half million dollar hotels, one million dollar hotel, and they have just let the contract for a two and one half million dollar hotel, to say nothing of the new business blocks, a magnificent coliseum, hundreds and hundreds of new homes from the modest little cottage to large Italian Spanish and nondescript types of beautiful homes, miles and miles of new paved streets and so many new additions to the city that I have to live here eleven years to know the names and locations of them all.

It is real estate everywhere in the hills, in the cafeterias, on the street cars, in the business houses, on the pier and on the green benches which line the sidewalks of the principal streets and for St. Petersburg is noted. It is advertised on the moving picture screen, the vaudeville artists take a crack about it, maybe the minister speak about it from the pulpit. I don't know if you hear it or see it, but it is so. It is handed to you, it is poked at you, it exudes from every green bench, the man next to you begins to talk to you, if you stop to look in a window, some one sidles up to you and wants to know if you don't want to go out and see More Acres, Lakewood, Pigment Estates, Bay Bridge Heights, Canada Terrace, Coldwater or one of the other nine hundred additions they have in St. Pete, to say nothing of land and lots in and near towns within a radius of two hundred miles from here. Some of these additions are close in, some are miles out. Some are new and some are old, but they all have only one sign, but say, serious signs. There seems to be one uniformity about them all—the price—higher than a mad cat's back.

Bridge Tolls Heavy. The new Gandy bridge which was opened to traffic last November crosses an arm of Tampa Bay, and connects Tampa and St. Pete. It is six miles long, the longest bridge in the world. It shortens the distance between Tampa and St. Pete by about thirty miles. There is a copious stream of autos going both ways, and at seventy five cents for each auto with ten cents each for more than one person I think they should call it Gandy's Mint. I have crossed it several times, one time at midnight (it's none of your business) and it sure is a long one. It is nine miles from the center of St. Pete to the end of Gandy bridge and every foot of ground between the two places is planted.

You hear great tales about the money that has been and is being made in real estate. One of the local papers carried an article about a man who bought twenty acres of land between the town and the bridge last spring for \$18,000 and sold it just the other day for \$50,000. A woman buys a modest little cottage for \$2,500 sells it in a short time for \$7,500 and the present owner refuses \$18,000 for it today. I sat on one of the green benches the other day and heard the following conversation between two men. It was just at the noon hour. First man—Have you any price on Smith's lot up on street? Second man—Yep. First man—When did you get it? Second man—Ten o'clock this morning.

First man—Oh I want something recent. And that is the way it goes. Ten minutes is ancient history in the real estate business in St. Pete. I have my car up to the curb the other day to get a drink or something and a I walked along a man ran after me and hollered out, Hello, how are you? Thinking it was some one who knew me or wanted to borrow a dollar I stopped and he asked me what I had been doing and he said he was selling a lot of land between the town and the bridge. He said he had sold a lot of it and that you had better get in there before they get your name from the hotel registers, and give them an inch and you are gone. They take you out to show their stuff in limousines, in fliers, in autos buses as big as a pullman car, in airplanes, and I suppose if none of the above mentioned conveyances were at hand, they would take you out by the scruff of the neck. Every other room on Central Avenue is a real estate office. The newspapers carry page on page of real estate advertising, and I am sure that if "my publishers" could only get half of the advertising these papers do here, they could build a new building every other year. It just gets in your blood, you get it. Every once in a while I look at that bank balance of mine, \$102, all that stands between three meals a day and a sea weed diet, and think I will make a plunge, but if I die, I would most likely be in the wrong direction. Some people are lucky. If they would fall in the creek, they would come out with brass in their pockets. I'd probably come out with my pants.

Man Makes Land. You know, up in Iowa, God made the land and when a man sells what he has, he is through. Down here along the gulf and bay, God made the land also, but He made water, too, and when they sell all of the land on the water front, they turn right in and pump up more sand and make more land, and if they keep on doing this, I don't know how long the gulf and bay will last. You might buy a fine home right on the water front, but if you didn't own the riparian rights, some one could come along, fill in, make more land and set you back in the brush. And now that's a little bit about the real estate business down here. I don't want to write much more for your "my publishers" will be wanting to charge me advertising rates. You may think I have been lying. Maybe I have, but not much; I never never lie except when it is necessary. But, honest to gosh, this whole thing is beyond me. It is almost like the mushroom growth of the mining or oil boom towns in the west only here it is sunshine and tourists. And this does not apply to St. Pete alone. Go any place in the state, and you will find the same thing. How long will it last? I don't know, ask me something easy. You know the principal outdoor sport used to be playing checkers in the park and pitching hoags in the woods. Now it is finding a parking space, and they tell me the tourists are just beginning to arrive, that they expect 50,000 between now and the first of February. As it is now you line up to get to the post office, you line up at the bank, you line up at the cafeterias, you line up at the moving pictures. Oh, what will it be when they all get here? I'm afraid some one is going to get pushed in the bay.

A lot of people think the present real estate values are way high. I do. The real estate down here is now a lot of people, and I will come back here in one, three or five years and join the "I remember" or the "it could have bought club." Well, I gotta get to bed as I am going out to the Coffee Pot Golf Club. Funny name, Coffee Pot Golf Club. It is worth being a foreign correspondent and I'm tired. If any of you want to show your appreciation, you can telegraph me or send me a dollar. My address is the Eber Arms hotel, Good night, old dears.

THE DUKE.

ERECT SNOW FENCE. TRAHER, Jan. 9.—Ten thousand feet of snow fencing recently purchased by the board of supervisors of Tama county is to be erected within a few days along the primary roads where most needed. It will be used largely on the east and west roads. Drifted snow did much damage to graded roads in the county last winter.

Take a BULOVA WATCH at its face value and you will take a BULOVA WATCH!

Wrist and Pocket Watches \$25 to \$2500 BOYSON JEWELRY CO. 225 So. 2nd St. Higley Bldg. Diamond Merchants Gift Shoppe of Quality.

Advertisement for Peter Pan Baking Co. featuring a loaf of bread and the text "Peter Pan it is The Certified Bread".

# THE FINAL WINDUP!!

Tomorrow Marks the Beginning of Ten Days of Bargain Giving That Know No Equal. Prices No Longer Cut Any Figure. It's Only a Question of What We Can Realize on the Balance of This Big \$30,000 Stock. The Die is Cast, the Final Decision Made. January 20th We Turn the Keys Over to the Landlord. From Now Until That Date You dictate Prices, Name Your Own Bargains. Come! Everybody!!

## FRIDAY and SATURDAY EVERY PRICE IS CRUSHED! READ! THEN ACT! SAVE!!

ALL LEATHER WORK Shoes \$189 Valued at \$4.50

MEN'S \$6.00 DRESS Shoes \$369 Hurry For These

ANY \$5.00 4-BUCKLE OVERSHOES \$239

\$12.00 ALL WOOL MACKINAW \$595 Going at Only

ANOTHER BIG LOT ALL WOOL COAT Sweaters \$169 Actually Worth \$1.00

MEN'S TROUSERS Neat stripes, well tailored, \$2.00 values, at \$1.79 \$5.00 heavy weight corduroy pants \$2.98

Genuine heavy weight Whipcord Breaches at \$2.39 Snag-proof—waterproof duck breeches. Ideal for hunters or outdoor men. \$2.98 Watch them go at

MEN-LOOK! LOOK! Blanket Lined LEATHER JACKETS \$298 A bargain that's bound to pack your store from door to door—but they've got to go no matter the loss. \$8.00 values at

FRIDAY & SATURDAY ONLY HEAVY HALF WOOL BLANKETS \$249 Values that will simply take your breath away. Warm and snug; whipped edges dark colors, and every one brand new and fresh. Regular \$6.00 values at

THE BARGAIN LANDSLIDE IS ON—60 DAYS SELLING WILL BE CRAMED INTO 10 DAYS. WATCH THE PEOPLE COME!

A GENUINE 3-POCKET O. D. SHIRT That Many Dealers Ask From \$2.50 to \$3.50 for 98c YES, IT'S BRAND NEW AND PERFECT

HOME-OWNERS AND CONTRACTORS GRAB THIS QUICK 300 GALLONS PURE READY-MIXED HOUSE PAINT \$145 GALLON We're losing exactly \$1.50 per gallon. You win.

They'll Come For These HEAVY \$5.00 COMFORTERS While 50 of Them Last They Go At \$249

# THE OUTLET STORE

OPEN SATURDAY NIGHT UNTIL 10 P. M. 125 THIRD AVE.

\$5.00 Special For This Week 27 Piece Dinner Set in a very neat White Pattern of Meakin English Ware This is an Open Stock Pattern and you will be able to add other pieces when needed. This week \$5.00 22 Piece Dinner Set of Meakin Decorated English Ware. This Week \$5.00 Extra Special This Week: Decorated English Teapots, each 98c White Tea Cups, each 8c FRANK J. DONAHOE 317-319 South First St. Phone 88.

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Every Fur Article Marked Below Manufacturer's Costs. Nothing Reserved From Our Complete Stock See Our Coats, Capes, and Chokers. Muskrat Coats \$55.00 up Pony Coats \$40.00 up Hudson Seal Coats \$145.00 up Raccoon Coats \$165.00 up Buy where the coats are manufactured. F. S. Mitvalsky & Company 901-3-5 South Second St.

FURNITURE and Rugs Hall - Ekfelt 216 THIRD AVE. A Special 20% Reduction on Staple Cotton and Wool Blankets

THE OUTLET STORE TENTS, CAMP EQUIPMENT, CAMP FURNITURE, SURPLUS AMMUNITION, FURS, SUPPLIES AND GENERAL MERCHANDISE. 10 MORE SELLING DAYS AND WE GO!

January 20th the Outlet Store passes into history but we know we are leaving behind us thousands of well satisfied customers who received \$2.00 in value for every \$1.00 they spent with us. But now for the final wind up. With one stroke of the pen we have cut prices down to unbelievable figures. We've made up our mind not to ship one pound of the remaining stock. It's going for whatever it will bring and take our word this store is still crammed with thousands of bargain items. We're starting a bargain festival that will be remembered many a day.

Regular \$1.25 Heavy SHIRTS 59c Wt. Blue Chambray Limit 1 to a Customer

WHILE IT LASTS ALL WOOL 2-PIECE UNDERWEAR PER GARMENT 98c

Friday and Saturday Any \$4.00 SUIT CASE \$1.39

Genuine Rockford Socks 28c value Pair 9c Limit 2 Pair to a customer