

the Beach, as Carl always loved to see it fly. Only now it was not soil, but sea sand sucked upward through pipes out of the bottom of Biscayne Bay to make land for a city yet to be born.

How crazy the whole panorama of activity seemed then! So much labor, so much money would be needed to build the land, to fill in jungle swamps to hold a city. Even Carl did not dream how cruel was the task ahead. But had he known, I am certain that he still would have gone on. It was difficult for most of us watching that scene to imagine a play city—or any city, for that matter—rising from such chaos. But Carl's eyes, so dim-seeing, saw it all.

Sometimes I would ask, "Carl, what about those plans of yours to retire?" Sheepishly, he would grin and say, "Honey, I haven't got the time just now."

Carl saw the work begin before we left John Levi in charge of that swarming project, in the evil heat of a Florida June, to return to Indianapolis.

The Trail-Blazers' tour to San Francisco occupied most of Carl's July, and afterwards he made several trips to New York and other cities to whip up additional interest in the Lincoln Highway. But we were back in Florida in August, of all months, as hot an August as ever exhausted the most seasoned Floridian—to say nothing of Hoosiers like ourselves.

Carl had told his friends in Indianapolis that he intended to spend seventy-five thousand dollars developing a winter playground for himself and his friends. The idea was not received with any great amount of enthusiasm in his home city. As for the Floridians, they looked with awe upon the phalanx of dredges pumping day and night on the shores of Carl's jungle kingdom on Biscayne Bay, and decided that public opinion had been right when, long before, it had judged Carl Fisher to be as crazy as a loon.

Among the engineering problems John Levi was facing was the need of three million cubic yards of dirt to fill in the swamp. The Fisher dredges—ugly, muddy objects—were pumping sand from the bottom of Biscayne Bay to fill it. One stretch of swamp, however, was a mile from the nearest shore, too far for any

dredge to pipe its stream of water and sand. A dredge had to be set in the middle of Collins Canal.

The fill was like thick soup. We found the men working in mud and slime up to their knees. They wore hip boots to guard against the bites of snakes. From the beginning, the whole saga of the fill was one of minor tragedies and major setbacks. Dredges broke down and had to be repaired under the broiling sun. Pipes parted to let water and sand rush into the wrong channels, ruining weeks of work. Other pipes that were sunk in the bay clogged with weeds and had to be cleared by divers. There were times when a ladder of men standing on one another's shoulders was formed under water to hold the bottom man in place so that he could work clearing the pipe. When a shark came too near, they would tap one another's legs as a signal to shoot to the surface.

All the materials and supplies for the workmen had to be brought across Biscayne Bay and through Collins Canal on barges. If the barges were not perfectly balanced, they turned over. Many a laden barge somersaulted and lost its cargo. A dock was built on the canal where the barges were unloaded.

The mules working on the project presented difficulties uniquely mulish. Several fell into the soupy fill, trying to escape the blood-sucking insects. One landed in Collins Canal upside down and his rescue presented a new problem in engineering. Finally Carl had smudge pots placed where the mules were tethered at night, but the tormented animals backed into them trying to escape from the mosquitoes and some were severely burned.

Carl had planned to build a sea wall and fill up about two hundred acres of the marsh. John Levi warned him that this would be no trifling work. Carl had counted on spending no more than the estimated seventy-five thousand dollars on building the foundations of the city. Now he found these great dredges, sucking up the bottom of Biscayne Bay and spewing it through pipes over mangrove roots and palmetto, were pumping night and day into his great fortune. His bills were fifty-two thousand dollars a day!