

bowls. He was guaranteeing sewers, sidewalks, electric lights, schools and churches—but to the public these seemed too fantastic. Doc's prizes they could at least believe in.

Carl, John Collins and the Lummas brothers were being branded as "wild-cat promoters trying to lure the suckers." Finally, Carl, unable to stop the cheap auctioneering, gave away land. He offered free lots to anyone who would build homes thereon and settle in Miami Beach. Only half a dozen people took advantage of this offer.

Such lots as these, choice sites that sold in the beginning for twenty-five hundred dollars, would within a few years be worth twenty-five thousand. One lot that Carl tried to give a Miami banker and was refused, later sold for fifty thousand. Carl offered six hundred feet of ocean frontage to anyone who would build a two-hundred-thousand-dollar hotel on it. Those who heard of his offer hooted it down. The Roney Plaza was built on that land a few years later at a cost of two million eight hundred dollars!

He was in despair. He could not believe human beings could be so blind.

Then he offered to finance the building of homes—anything to bring citizens to his magnificent and empty new city. A few people were daring enough to accept this offer. It was this reluctant acceptance of twenty thousand dollars' worth of free land that actually started the colonization of Miami Beach.

W. T. Anderson, the editor and owner of the *Macon Telegraph*, was among those to whom Carl tried to give property. "It's going to be valuable some day," Carl said.

But Anderson had watched the mammoth phantasmagoria of the dredging and thought the whole business "pretty crazy." He thanked Carl, and refused.

"I don't need any thanks," said Carl. "You'd be saving me two dollars and a half a year taxes by accepting. I have more lots now than anything else, and none of them are worth a damn."

Anderson himself told the end of the story. "A few years later that lot sold for eighteen thousand; two weeks later the pur-

chaser sold it for twenty-two thousand; and thirty days later the second purchaser sold it for fifty-six thousand."

What broke Carl's heart in these anxious days was the fact that he was not trying to sell, so much as share. As someone once said, Carl leaned over backward to give the other fellow the best part of the deal. He often said he didn't want to leave any money when he died. He wasn't building Miami Beach with the idea of making a fortune. Miami Beach was created by a man with a philosophy for a new design for living, who considered play as soul-saving as work or religion.

Carl was trying to sell people he liked a city he had built and loved. He had put into Miami Beach something they would not find elsewhere, backed it with his own developments, poured into it his millions, only to find he couldn't even give lots away!

Many times before our fireplace of the Beach Shadows, I heard Carl's friends plead with him to leave this fantastic dream city before all his money was gone. Even Jim Allison, his partner in all projects from Prest-O-Lite on, refused to "see" Miami Beach in the beginning, and urged Carl to get out.

Carl would only grin, that dimpled grin that, for all its sweetness, seemed set in iron.

But after his friends were gone he would sit quietly, smoking and staring into the fire, the dark eyes behind glasses narrowed with anxiety. Rowdy would sag into sleep at his feet and I would sit quietly in the low chair with my head against Carl's knees.

Suddenly he would pitch his cigar into the fire. His voice would be jubilant. "Goddammit, I've got it!"

He wouldn't be speaking to me at all. But he had hit upon some new desperate idea for keeping Miami Beach from becoming a ghost project.

As Miami Beach developed I felt more often utterly alone. Speedway and the Lincoln Highway and all the other projects had never held Carl like this dream that seemed bound to end in defeat. He couldn't accept failure. He had a slogan that I heard him repeat many times. "When a thing doesn't sell, raise its price."