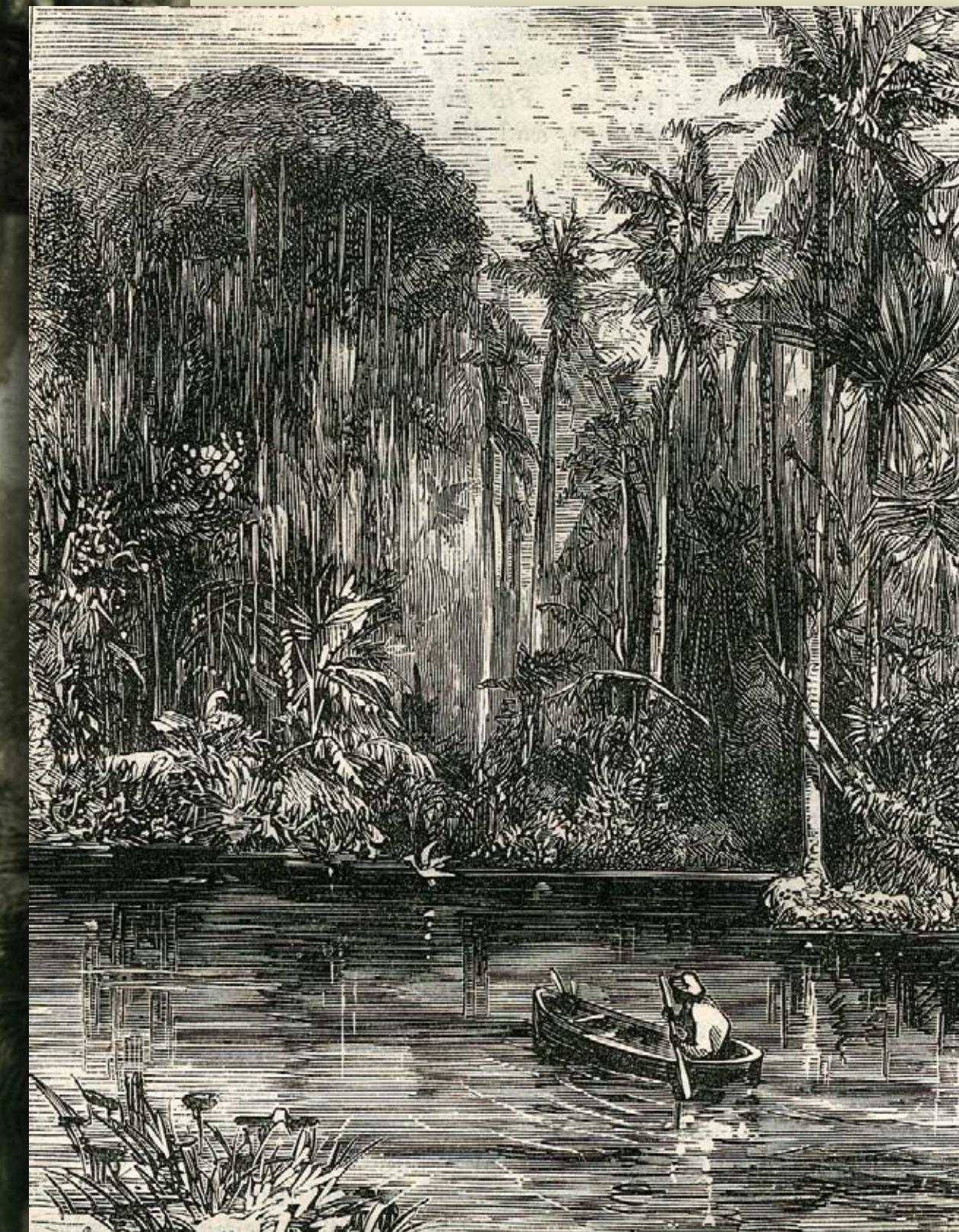


GREEN SPRINGS PARK



A national publication's view of Green Springs. Dark waters, mysterious forests, and Spanish moss defined Florida's popular image after the Civil War.

Illustration from Harper's New Monthly Magazine, October 1874.

Once said to be "bottomless," Green Springs actually has lateral vents and a widening shaft that descends 76 feet to a silt-covered limestone floor. Algae and sulphur affect the spring's color, but dry spells can darken the water and even halt the discharge. When the spring *is* running, its waters join a small creek that drains other

springs in the area, eventually flowing into Lake Monroe. The retaining wall dates from the 1940s, when owners of a swimming concession replaced the natural outlet to create a shallow area for children.

The cast of characters here is a long one: Florida natives, Seminole Wars soldiers, and a colorful developer and hustler. Cornelius Taylor promoted his spring in the 1840s, offering bottled water and promises of good health. Decades later, the area still drew visitors from far and near—and local legends persisted. One farmer claimed that Green Springs had popped up overnight, after dynamiters drained another spring to the north. Others told of a wagon falling into the spring, then emerging from a vent in the ocean.

The truth is, mystery has always been part of the Green Springs experience. Traveling to Enterprise in the 1860s, one visitor wondered if she had left America and entered some foreign realm. Outside her hotel lay a land of "weird, wild, luxuriant nature."

Delicate Green Waters

Above: Green Springs in the 1880s, with orange trees in the background. Enterprise was a focus for guidebooks, magazines, and stereo photos—twin pictures viewed in special holders to create a 3-D effect.

From a stereoview by M.M. and W.H. Gardner, courtesy of the Florida Photographic Collection/State Archives.

Relaxing at Green Springs in the 1940s.

Photo courtesy of the West Volusia Historical Society.



The jewel of this park is its spring, a popular attraction for tourists and travel writers over the years. Green Springs (also known in the past as Green Sulphur Spring and Green Spring, without an s) struck people as exotic and strange. A guidebook author called its waters "green as the greenest paint," but others sensed something ethereal. More than one visitor marveled at the "delicate green" view.