

# J. C. TURNER LUMBER COMPANY,

MANUFACTURERS AND WHOLESALERS OF

## LUMBER AND SHINGLES.

Box 228

YARD DOCK AND PLANING MILL  
IRVINGTON-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK  
REAL ESTATE AND  
TIMBER LAND DEPARTMENT  
100 E. 42<sup>ND</sup> ST. (PERSHING SQUARE BLDG)  
NEW YORK, N.Y.

GULF CYPRESS  
PACIFIC COAST PRODUCTS

IRVINGTON (WESTCHESTER CO.) N.Y.  
ON THE HUDSON RIVER 10 MILES NORTH OF NEW YORK CITY

August 16, 1962

Mr. Melvin Finn  
Florida Nature Conservancy  
310 Biscayne Building  
Miami 32, Florida

Dear Mr. Finn:

QUOTATIONS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. ALL AGREEMENTS ARE CONTINGENT UPON STRIKES, FIRES, ACCIDENTS AND OCCURRENCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL

This is in reply to your letter of August 10th addressed to Mr. Hinchliffe at Perry, Florida. The Lee Tidewater Cypress Company of Perry, Florida, is operated as a division of this Company.

We think you know it was our gift of a portion of the Corkscrew Swamp that resulted in the eventual formation of the Sanctuary at the north end of that swamp. Many people believe we made the gift after some of the swamp had been purchased from us but that is not so. We made the gift first, then later on Mr. Baker and Mrs. Holmes and perhaps some others recognized a need to conserve a larger part of the north end of the swamp.

We have a good many stockholders and some of them believe the Company has no good right to give away its assets and if gifts are going to be made this is a prerogative of the individual stockholder.

We doubt if we would want to undertake an effort to secure the approval of our stockholders to the making of another gift of some of our property.

We think you know toward the south end of the Fachtahatchee strand, there is a group of wonderful Royal Palms. These trees were right in the center of the 1961 hurricane and it is a wonder any of them are standing. They suffered severely, but we understand nature is healing the wounds and we hope it will not be long before they have regained their fine beauty.

This group of Royal Palms caused us to think of the possibility of creating in that immediate neighborhood something as beautiful as Cypress Gardens. The average human being loves flowers and trees and it should not be difficult to create something that would have considerable interest for the average visitor to Florida.

Mr. Melvin Finn  
Florida Nature Conservancy

August 16, 1962

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You also probably know that most of the *Paurotis Wrightii* in Florida comes from this section. We are not sure yet how the terrible fires of this past Spring that reached all through South Florida have treated these lovely palms.

We do not have the spirit and the talent of a land developer. The day will come, we think, when someone with imagination and courage will succeed in creating an area of great beauty in this swamp area. We must not forget that Miami Beach was once largely a mangrove swamp. We saw a mangrove area south of Miami which was transformed into a lovely habitable section in not more than three years time. This is not surprising, for flowers, shrubs and trees grow rapidly in South Florida and quickly add beauty to what man creates.

At the present time we think all we can say to you is that some parts of the Big Cypress area should be preserved for those who come after us.

Our stockholders would like to witness the affect on our swamp area of the development that seems to be beginning in Southwest Florida. We hear reports of all sorts of prices being asked for land in that area. We own some land in Hernando County, Florida, which we were prepared to sell for \$500. per acre. It is an interesting piece of property....a mixture of low land and fairly high land and not far from the Gulf. Our \$500. idea of value we thought was plenty high enough.

Adjoining us on two sides were several pieces of land aggregating about 2,000 acres that would have improved somewhat our holdings. We did not wish to buy this property but we thought we might secure permission to offer this other land for sale with ours. We can get the permission at \$1,000. an acre. This seems like a ridiculously high price to us at this moment. The owner of this other land says he believes his property is worth \$1,000. an acre and he intends to hold on to it until he can get it. Having worked in Florida for 50 years and having had an opportunity of watching the development and the growth of the State, what right have we to say that our neighbor is wrong?

You will remember west central Florida experienced very heavy rains three or perhaps four years ago. About 150 or 200 acres of this other land was under water from 1 to 2' deep for over a year. The owner is well aware of this and yet he believes his property is worth \$1,000. an acre.

Sometime in the future we may be able to be of assistance in creating something of interest in the Big Cypress country.

Mr. Melvin Fin  
Florida Nature Conservancy

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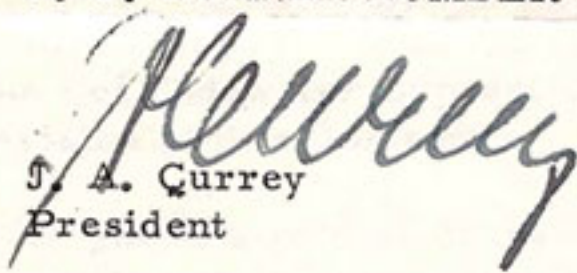
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You may find it difficult to believe this, but having watched the speed with which alligators perpetuate themselves in the Big Cypress Swamp, we asked Mr. Hinchliffe to inquire if we had any right under the State law to go into the business of raising alligators. Dr. Schweitzer would be horrified at such a thought so we admit we may have been cruel in our thinking. We mention this only to show you we have been thinking of what might be done with this wilderness area.

With many thanks for your letter, we are

Very truly yours,

J. C. TURNER LUMBER COMPANY

  
J. A. Currey  
President

JAC:mc