

**The A. R. Cunningham Family
Moving to Florida in 1911
To Grow Tomatoes**



Sheldon Cunningham
With Support from Jeff Blakley
October 2018

Introduction

After Christmas in 1910 my grandfather Arthur R. Cunningham, his wife Ella May and sons Cameron and Donald left Michigan and moved to Florida, joining other Detroiters to farm tomatoes. The novice farmers and their families arrived in a new Florida town called Detroit that was set up by real estate promoters. The name was changed to Florida City in 1914.

Before his first tomato harvest in 1911, Arthur suffered major crop losses when his fields were flooded in a storm. At some point after the flood, the family returned north by ship. Their destination was Deerfield, Illinois, where they lived for about a year. Then the Cunningham family returned to their home on Stanton Avenue in Detroit.

This story of that Florida adventure in 1911 is based on family lore plus background documents and clippings. We are grateful to Jeff Blakley, historian, for his help and support in preparing this story. Jeff lives in Homestead, Florida, jeff@hsdade.com. He provided copies of documents, and articles that added details, character and credibility to this tale.

We also have included a few of the photos taken by Ella May Cunningham while she was in Florida. She wrote names and descriptions on the backs of some of the pictures. We are very thankful that Ella May, and other family members, saved her Florida photos for future generations.

Arthur Robb Cunningham Family

Arthur Cunningham was born in 1872 in Detroit, Michigan. From 1888 to 1895, he was a clerk for Chicago and Grand Trunk Railway; then he left to work for American Express. Between 1903 and 1930, with the exception of 1911 and 1912, Art was a pharmacist and owner of drug stores in Detroit. His first store was at 1300 Grand River Avenue, and later he moved to 805 Kercheval near a home he built on Seminole Avenue on the east side of Detroit.

Arthur married Ella May Banning in Detroit. Ella was born in Ontario, but she was living in Detroit when they married. At the time of the move to Florida in 1911, Arthur was 38 years old, Ella, 30, and sons Cameron and Donald were nine and eight, respectively.

The photo at the right shows the Cunningham family of Detroit, Florida in 1911, and they are all dressed up for a ride in the wagon. Arthur is driving the team of mules, and Ella May is seated behind him, with Cam in the middle and Don on the right.



First Mention of the Cunningham Family's Planned Move to Florida, August 1910

GO TO MAKE NEW TOWN OF DETROIT IN FLORIDA

Detroit is soon to have an offshoot in Florida—Detroit, Dade county, Florida.

There are about a hundred citizens in various walks of life who are soon to decamp and set up tents and then bungalows in Detroit, Florida, where there is now nothing much but the stakes that mark out the lots.

Some ten-acre farms and city lots thrown in tempted them into the business of tomato and orange growing, 27 miles from Miami and six miles from the Atlantic coast.

Among those who it is said are to leave the city soon are: Dr. T. W. Shields and his brother, Dr. S. S. Shields, John A. Kay, grocer; A. R. Cunningham, drugist; Guy Hilliker, railway man; William Whiting, formerly of Detroit, now in Chicago; Edward Stiling and Edward Thompson. If not on the map the town at least has a site on the railroad; with the farms near by. Some are to leave early this fall and others will follow.

Historian Jeff Blakley shared the article at the left from the *Detroit (Michigan) Free Press* of August 1, 1910.

This is the only source we have found that lists A. R. Cunningham as one of the Detroiters who planned to move to South Florida to grow tomatoes.

The Shields brothers, who also are mentioned, are in some of the photos that Ella May Cunningham took in Florida. Ed Stiling was the promoter of the farming and land venture who worked for the Tatum Brothers real estate development company in Florida. His daughter Octavia is in some of Ella May's photos. John A. Kay and Guy Hilliker are mentioned in some of the Florida newspaper articles that follow.

The potential rewards of tomato farming must have been great for Detroiters to leave good occupations and comfortable lives for the hard work of farming ten acres and living in a tent or "bungalow" in the South Florida heat and humidity.

Land Purchasing and Sales Activities of Florida Promoter Edward Stiling in 1910

Ed Stiling, who sent this telegram, was a long-time Detroit, Michigan, resident who also had spent many years in Florida. He worked for Tatum Brothers, the Florida land developers, and Ed is credited with naming the tomato farming settlement "Detroit." This night-letter says in part: "Have another very choice section: ... prices advancing rapidly." The Florida land boom was progressing.

Form 2289 J.

NIGHT LETTER

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY

25,000 OFFICES IN AMERICA INCORPORATED CABLE SERVICE TO ALL THE WORLD

ROBERT C. CLOWRY, PRESIDENT BELVIDERE BROOKS, GENERAL MANAGER

RECEIVER'S No.	TIME FILED	CHECK
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SEND the following **NIGHT LETTER** subject to } August 6th, 1910. **191**
the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to }

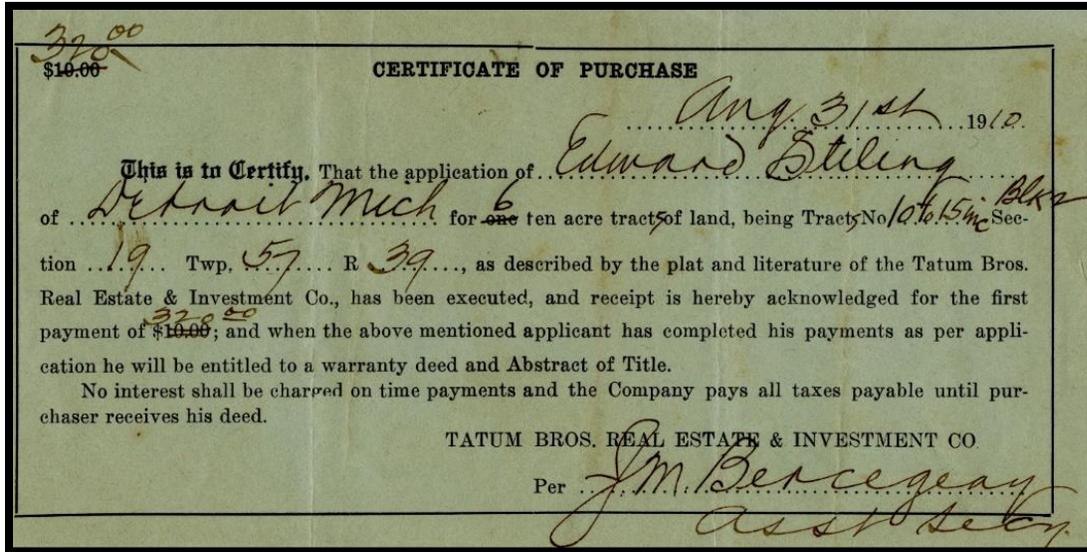
To T. W. Shields, 1287 Grand River Avenue,
Detroit, Mich.

Name of new town is Detroit. A town lot with every ten acres whether
owner locates by February first or not. Farms contain more than ten
acres after roads are ~~marked~~ ^{taken} off. Am more pleased than ever. Have
another very choice section; hope to sell it all in a month; prices
advancing rapidly. Get all your friends and then some. See letter,
also Miami paper.

Edward Stiling.

In 1910 Dr. T. W. Shields, the addressee, was a dentist and neighbor of Art Cunningham in Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Shields' address on the telegram is 1287 Grand River Avenue, which was across the street from the Arthur R. Cunningham drugstore at 1300 Grand River.

The CERTIFICATE OF PURCHASE shown on the next page is a receipt for a down payment of \$320.00 by Edward Stiling on six 10-acre tracts, Nos. 10-15 in Block 2, Section 19. It is the first of a series of payments described on the application to purchase these tracts. Section 19 was directly east of Detroit, Florida.

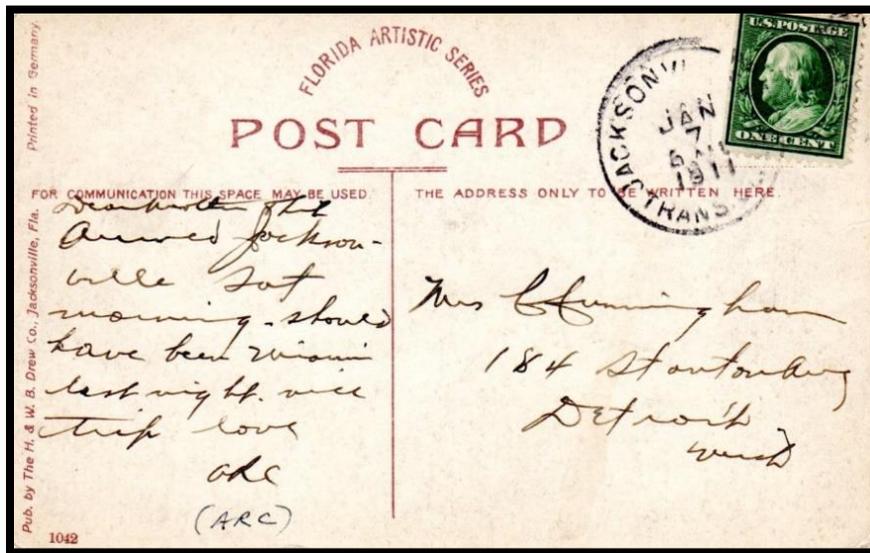


On September 1, 1910, the day after the land purchase just described, Stiling filed an APPLICATION to buy seven more tracts in Block 2. He made a down payment of \$373, and agreed to pay \$70 every 30 days until he paid a total of \$3,600; this is \$514 per acre. Adjusting for inflation since 1910, the value in today's dollars is about \$13,000 per acre.

The Arthur Cunningham Family Arrives in Florida

Detroit, Florida, is the destination south of Miami where the four members of the Arthur R. Cunningham family, and others from Michigan, decided to live and raise tomatoes. Shown below are both sides of a postcard dated January 7, 1911, from Arthur to his mother in Detroit saying that the family had arrived in Jacksonville, Florida, but they had hoped to be in Miami by then.

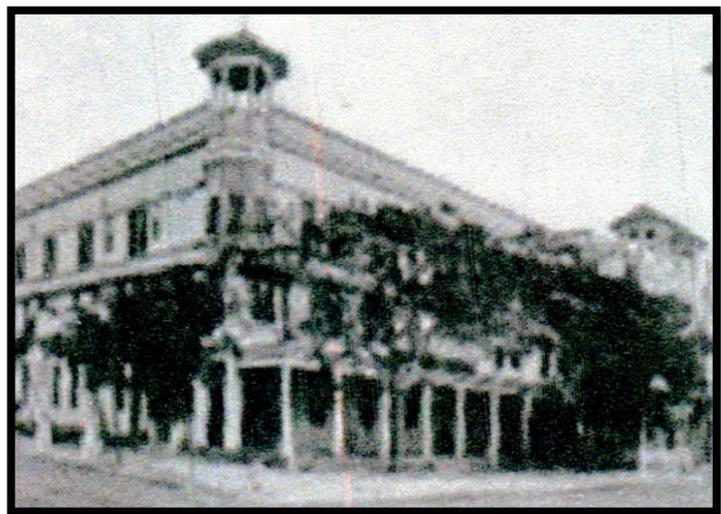




The card is postmarked January 7, 1911, as shown at the left. The Cunningham family must have departed Michigan at the end of 1910. Arthur wrote to his mother, Catherine Cunningham who had stayed behind in the family home on Stanton Avenue with her daughter Elizabeth and boarders Doug and Bob Murray. This penny postcard is over 100 years old.

Visitors from Nearby Detroit Visit Miami, Florida, January and February 1911

On January 17, 1911, *The Miami News* listed among the recent guests of the Green Tree Inn in Miami the following men from Detroit, Florida: J. A. Kay, A. R. Cunningham, Paul Hoffman, Walter Wright and O. A. Hardin. A photo of the Green Tree Inn from a brochure of the period is shown at the right. The three-story building featured a veranda and towers. John A. Kay was a grocer in Detroit, Michigan, who was mentioned in the *Free Press* article in 1910, above.



The brochure also reported that Miami was growing rapidly. The population was 5,500 in 1910, and by January 1914, it had climbed to 16,000. In the same period property valuations increased from \$1.5 to \$6.0 million.

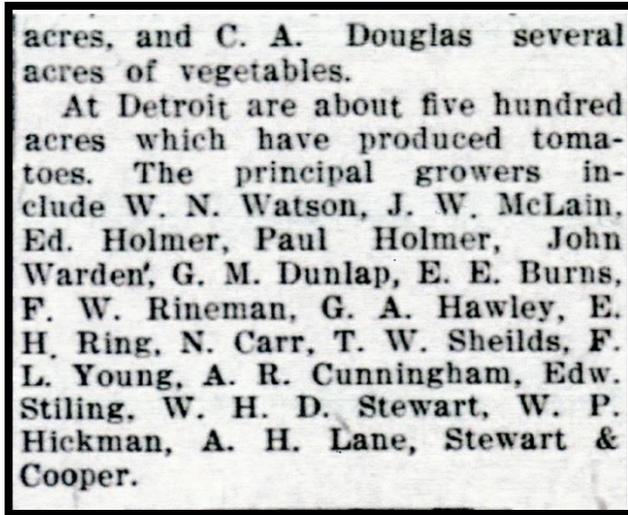
From the *Miami Metropolis* dated Friday, February 17, 1911: "A. R. Cunningham, wife and sons, have been in Miami some days visiting and shopping. Messrs. Cunningham, Jack Kay and Teakle are *enroute* home from Miami with a brand-new wagon and span of mules, with Captain Jack as pilot we know it is a good voyage for we are betting on Jack." Robert T. Teakle owned a building construction business in Detroit, Michigan, with G. W. Golden.

The article is datelined Detroit, Florida. and continues: “Our little city got its first mail pouch today. Up to this date mail has been carried from Homestead (two miles from Detroit), often by volunteers but mostly at the expense of and distributed by O. A. Hardin and his successors, Van Horn and Williams, at their general store. The amount of mail addressed to Detroit that found its way here without any official standing with the postal authorities, was a marvel to all, and the total weight amounted to all one man could carry from Homestead.”

The Principal Tomato Farmers Living in Detroit, Florida, in Early 1911

The article at the right is from the *Miami Metropolis* dated February 24, 1911.

The only tomato “principal growers” names familiar to historian Jeff Blakley are E. H. Ring (owner of a sawmill in Detroit, Florida), T. W. Shields (a dentist/farmer and brother of S. S. Shields, a medical doctor/farmer), Edward Stiling (chief salesman for the Miami Land & Development Company, the promoters of farming around Detroit), and Arthur R. Cunningham (pharmacist/farmer).



Activities of the A. R. Cunninghams and Others in Detroit, Florida, April 1911



Ladies are seated on the wagon at the S. S. Shields’ home, with Ella May Cunningham on the right. Dr. S. S. Shields and Dr. T. W. Shields, left to right, are in front of the wagon wheel. The other women are, left to right, Miss Hunter, Mrs. S. S. Shields, Elanor and Octavia. Miss Hunter was the daughter of William Hunter who settled in Detroit in 1908, Elanor was the daughter of Samuel S. Shields, and Octavia was the daughter of Edward Stiling, enthusiastic promoter of Florida land.

PROMISE OF MORE ACTIVITY IN BUSY TOWN OF DETROIT

VEGETABLE SEASON CLOSES BUT
ONLY A BRIEF REST IS EX-
PECTED—MANY COMERS AND
GOERS WITH DELIGHTFUL SO-
CIAL TIMES IN THE COMMUN-
ITY.

DETROIT, April 11.—Detroit is now taking a little rest between the farming, which is drawing to a close for the season, and the business activities that the Miami Land & Development Company, successors to Tatum Bros. & Co., are planning to begin at once.

Capt. H. D. Tatum who has so efficiently represented the Tatum Bros. & Co. interests, has resigned and returned north to wind up a large estate of which he was executor. He remained a month longer than he had intended, merging the Tatum interests with the Lawton, Oklahoma, capitalists.

Mr. Lafe Ishmael is the new superintendent of the company interests here now. Mr. Ishmael was one of the first to settle in Detroit. We congratulate him on his new office and predict success for him.

O. A. Hardin, Detroit's talented civil engineer, was in Miami with the company and has already put a large force of men in the field surveying and taking soundings. He has his old assistant, W. R. Love, with him again.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sharp spent Monday and Tuesday in Miami.

A. R. Cunningham, wife and two sons are spending the week in Miami.

The article on the left, datelined April 11, 1911, from the *Miami Metropolis* states that the local farming season is drawing to a close. The piece also describes a change in management of the Detroit area project from Tatum Brothers to the Miami Land & Development Co.

In an earlier article dated January 17, above, O. A. Hardin, the civil engineer referred to in this article, was staying at the Green Tree Inn in Miami. A. R. Cunningham also was listed at the Green Tree at about the same time.

Ella May Cunningham took a photo of the house of Charles Sharp who is mentioned in this article. She noted on the back of the photo that behind the house was a detached kitchen. The kitchen was under a tent.

The article also mentions that A. R. Cunningham and his family are spending the week in Miami. **Note:** As far as we know, this comment on April 11, 1911, marks the last time that either A. R. Cunningham or his family is mentioned in a Miami newspaper.

In a portion of the article not shown here the writer goes on to describe recent developments in Detroit, Florida, some of the individuals involved in infrastructure projects, and residents traveling either to Miami or to the north (presumably to Michigan).

The concluding paragraph, also not shown here, states that "the public hall fund received quite a nice boost" at a very enjoyable ice cream social recently hosted by Dr. T. W. Shields and his wife at their "well-appointed home" in Detroit. (More information on this Town Hall is presented later.)

Land Promotion Advertisement in the Detroit (Michigan) Times, September 30, 1911

FOR SALE—FARMS. FOR SALE—FARMS.

FLORIDA

We are offering choice five and ten-acre Farms at DETROIT, Dade county, FLORIDA, located on the Florida East Coast R. R., 30 miles south of Miami, on easy terms and easy payments.

\$10 down and \$10 per month; no interest; no taxes until paid for, and a building lot in Detroit, deeded free with each farm.

Climate is ideal; annual average temperature 76 degrees; hottest day on record 96 degrees; annual rain fall 68.7. Where can you beat it?

DETROIT is being connected with Biscayne Bay by large canal.

Prices advance \$10 per acre Oct. 1. Consequently in order to take advantage of the present prices, it will be necessary to act quickly.

By buying during the present week you save \$100 on 10 acres. Worth saving, isn't it?

Write for free booklet.

EDWARD STILING

General Agent, 692 Trumbull Ave., Detroit, Mich.
Phone Grand 4306.

The advertisement shown above is the work of promoter Edward Stiling, who then resided in both Detroit, Michigan, and Detroit, Florida. His pitch on Florida land to Michigan prospects emphasized: a low down-payment, no interest, an urgent need to buy before a price increase, no taxes, great climate, and a “free” building lot in Detroit. Who could refuse such an offer?

The photo at the right shows Art Cunningham taking a break from the day’s farming chores with his sons on the front porch of their home in Detroit.

Art is washing up by the water pump at the edge of the porch, and Don is sitting on the steps with his hatchet. Cam is peering out from inside the house through a hole in the burlap screening covering the front door.

The shiplap construction on the exterior of the house would have covered the cracks caused by the drying of the green, freshly cut lumber.



Art Cunningham Returns to Detroit, Michigan, in the Summer of 1911

SAYS DETROIT, FLA., IS ON THE BOOM

Edward Stiling, state agent for the Miami Land & Development Co., which has property in Miami and Detroit, Florida, wishes to correct the impression that Detroit, Florida, founded but eight months ago, is not on the boom. Mr. Stiling, whose home is at 632 Trumbull avenue, is in the city and declares that the new colony is growing rapidly, that land is in demand and that crops are excellent. The colony is made up mostly of Detroiters, some of whom are back here for the summer. It was due to their return that the impression got abroad that the new colony was not doing well.

"We are digging a 30-foot canal from Detroit, Florida, to Biscayne Bay, a distance of nine miles," said Mr. Stiling, "and when this is completed the town will boom even more than at present. We have a population of 200 and the town is well laid out, the streets being 70 and 100 feet wide. Ten-acre farms are the average, and with each farm a town lot, 50x150 feet, is given free of charge. Tropical fruits and vegetables are grown, and the crops are abundant."

Mr. Stiling was the founder of the Florida town, which he named after his home city, having lived here for over 30 years. He, Guy Hilliker and A. R. Cunningham are in the city, but will return to Detroit, Florida.

The story at the left from a Detroit, Michigan, paper states that A. R. Cunningham is back from Florida with Ed Stiling and others. That was a major trip in those days. Although there is no date provided, the article says the Florida colony was "founded but eight months ago" and that Detroiters "are back home for the summer." That seems to suggest it was published sometime in May to August of 1911. Also returning to Detroit is Guy Hilliker, a railroad man listed above in the August 10, 1910, *Free Press* article about Detroiters who planned to farm in Florida.

We don't know the reason for Art's returning to Detroit. He may have been helping Ed Stiling sell Florida farm tracts. Or maybe he was exploring business opportunities in Detroit that would be available when he returned. There are many other possible reasons, including: simply leaving an unsuccessful farming venture, taking a break from farming, handling family issues, or conducting other business. Also, the article does not say whether Art's family was with him, or if they stayed in Florida.

Art might have returned to Florida, and then moved to Deerfield, Illinois, to spend a second year away from Detroit. Or he might have moved directly to Deerfield after his summer visit to Michigan.

Letter of Grievances Addressed to Miami Land and Development Company, April 1912

Jeff Blakley provided a copy of a threatening letter of April 24, 1912, from farmers in Detroit, Florida. It was addressed to the Miami Land and Development Company. The letter was in response to Miami Land's letter of reply to an initial letter of grievances from the farmers. We have not found the farmers' initial letter or the Miami Land replies to either of the farmers' letters.

The two-page letter states: "...every cropper here has lost money, and in many cases lost his all by coming to a proposition that was not ready by several years." The letter goes on to say that (Miami

Land) had promised to build paved streets lined with palms, four-foot drainage canals, and roads to every lot and to the bay; and that has not happened. Furthermore, a Miami Land official had complained that, “Those Detroit people have been living off the Company for two years.”

And the farmers continued: “We came here in good faith, sacrificing good positions and sacrificing our properties and accounts and after two years of toil and unaccustomed hardships and loss that could have been partly avoided had your company kept its work up to (promises in) the printed literature. ...And then you wonder why our people complain.”

The threat of taking the complaints to the press was made: “You seem to fear the publicity of the Northern papers ... Our people are demanding an answer by Saturday night April 27, 1912. ...We have access to four State Press Associations ... and five of the largest press associations in the United States as well as four daily and weekly papers in Detroit, Michigan.... In the absence of a favorable reply, next Saturday night April 27, 1912, our people are to vote on the matter of beginning proceedings at once.” The letter was from G. A. Reynolds and M. L. Williams.

We do not know if, or how, these differences were arbitrated, but clearly in April 1912, the farmers were extremely unhappy. We believe the Cunningham family had already left by then. However, this letter provides many reasons that may have influenced the family’s decision to leave Florida.

History of Florida City (Originally Detroit), Florida

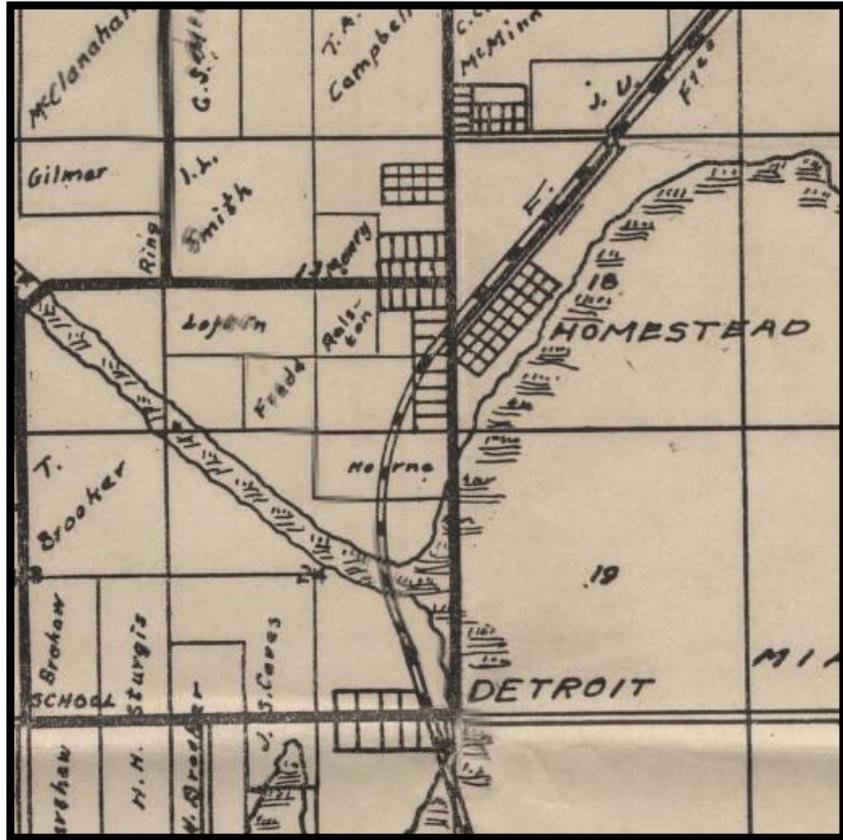
Florida City is the southernmost mainland town in the United States. In about 1910, promoter Ed Stiling proposed the name Detroit, Florida, to group of settlers from Detroit, Michigan. They liked the idea, but the Post Office Department said this would be confusing. In 1914 the town officially was renamed Florida City by a vote of the residents. The photo below, taken by Ella May Cunningham, shows passengers boarding the Florida East Coast Railroad in Detroit in 1911.



Florida City is two miles south of Homestead, and 27 miles south of Miami, near the tip of the Florida peninsula. To the east and south are Biscayne Bay, the Florida Keys and the Atlantic Ocean. Ten miles west of Florida City are the wetlands and sawgrass prairies of Everglades National Park, the only ecosystem of its kind in the world.

At the right is a 1912 map of the Homestead and Detroit area of South Florida, showing the railroad serving both towns and the location of the wetlands on the eastern edge of the region.

The Florida East Coast Railroad line is routed southwest through Homestead, then it curves south through Detroit and continues south to Key West. Both Homestead and Detroit are located on rocky land that in 1912 supported a dense forest of southern slash pine, known as Dade County Pine.



The double line just under the word “DETROIT” represents a 30-foot canal, nine miles long, that was built by the Tatum Brothers’ land company. It flows east from Detroit, through the East Glade, to Biscayne Bay south of Miami. Section 19, northeast of Detroit, is mentioned in Ed Stiling’s land receipt and his certificate to purchase land that were described previously.

Florida City is an old city by South Florida standards. The first settlers were from Detroit, Michigan, and they started arriving in 1910. They were followed by settlers from all over the Midwest in places where the Miami Land & Development Company had sales offices.

By 1913, the Miami Land & Development Company had purchased 22,000 acres in and around Detroit. They advertised heavily in Detroit, Michigan, and throughout the Midwest, and attracted many to their "Garden of Eden." A lot of Detroiters stayed for a while, but after a period of months, or in some cases a few years, they returned to Michigan. From a population of 200 in 1911, Florida City had grown to over 800 residents in 1922.

Promoter Ed Stiling and the Detroit Town Hall

The following portrayal is based on a biography of Edward Stiling, published in the August 6, 1914, edition of the *Homestead Enterprise*. Ed Stiling was born in Canada. When he was young his family moved to Michigan. After graduating from college, he became interested in Florida because of its delightful climate and the opportunities it offered. After 15 years in Florida, Ed sold his store and returned to Detroit. Twelve years later Stiling joined the Tatum Brothers as their first agent. He was given the Michigan market, and was very successful selling land in Florida.

Eventually Stiling owned or controlled more than 350 acres of land in and around Detroit, Florida. He also owned and operated a thriving canning factory there. The Tatum Brothers' firm prospered and grew over the years into a \$200-million business, but it was forced into bankruptcy in the land crash of the 1920's.

As an example of Edward Stiling's public spirit and his enterprise, the Detroit Town Hall offered accommodation to gatherings over a span of 80 years. (Unfortunately, the Town Hall was demolished after Hurricane Andrew in 1992.) Mr. Stiling was the prime mover for the project, and here is the story:

One afternoon in 1911, R. T. Teakle, A. R. Cunningham, O. A. Hardin, A. H. Love and Ed Stiling were sitting on a lumber pile in front of the latter's office discussing the needs of Detroit. Mr. Stiling suggested that they build a Town Hall and at once arranged for a mass meeting where a total of \$400 was subscribed. Work was started at once. When all the funds had been used, work was suspended.

In the mean-time Ed Stiling was traveling; and when he returned, he found that the Women's Industrial Club had assumed the old debt and opened the building which was far from finished. Stiling at once went to Miami and in one day raised \$300 to finish the project.

Evolution of the Women's Industrial Club of Detroit, Florida



In early 1911, Ella May Cunningham took the photo shown at the left of a group of about a dozen women of Detroit, Florida, and she wrote the following comment on the back of the photo: "The club of ladies; we haven't named it yet."

We learn more about development of the ladies' club from an article by Jeff Blakley that was published on his website on September 18, 2016. He refers us to the July 16, 1914, issue of the *Homestead Enterprise* which says that on October 29, 1911, the Women's Industrial Club in Detroit was organized for social reasons as well as to promote the civic betterment of Detroit.

Soon after they arrived in Detroit on October 28, 1910, the young ladies of the town formed a club, known as "The Big Four." The members were Miss Lillian Hunter, Miss Marion Sharp, Miss Eleanor Shields and Miss Octavia Stiling. These daughters of Detroit families helped themselves and others not to be homesick for friends and associates in the north.

As noted previously, building of the Town Hall which began in 1911 was halted after the roof was completed because the money ran out. The building was closed until the bills could be paid. This is when the women took an active hand in public affairs. On October 29, 1911, the following petition was adopted by the Women's Industrial Club: "We, the undersigned ladies, hereby agree to take it upon ourselves to do all in our power to pay the claims on the Town Hall held by Mr. Ring and others. Possession to be given at once to the ladies as a society, that the hall may be opened to the public."

Women signing the document were: Mrs. Geo. A. Reynolds (Her husband signed the grievances letter in 1912.), Mrs. Chas. E. Sharp, Mrs. T. W. Shields, Mrs. S. S. Shields, Mrs. E. H. Ring, Mrs. F. L. Young, Mrs. Edward Stiling, Miss Marion Turner, Miss Eleanor Shields, Miss Lillie D. Hunter, and Mrs. W. H. Hunter.

Note: Based on various family photos from 1911, Ella May was a good friend of many of these women who signed the Women's Industrial Club document, but she was not a signer on October 29. From this evidence we infer that the Cunningham family had left Florida sometime before the end of October 1911.

Concluding Thoughts on the Move to Florida by the A. R. Cunningham Family

We know that the Cunningham family arrived in Florida in January 1911. However, we are not sure exactly when they left. They probably headed north no sooner than late spring or early summer of 1911, and no later than October of that year. My father Donald recalled that near the end of the voyage north, the captain had their poorly-tanned alligator hides in their trunk removed and thrown overboard. The hides were rotting and producing a terrible smell. The family lore is that the Cunninghams spent a year in Florida, and the following year in Deerfield, Illinois, before returning to their home in Detroit.

In our verbal family history, the reason given for leaving Florida was that rainstorms flooded the tomato crop just before harvest. This may have happened in April or May 1911. Based on the information included in the grievances letter discussed above, there may have been several other reasons for leaving besides a poor harvest.

The time in Detroit, Florida was a major adventure for this pharmacist and his family from Michigan. Besides the hard work of farming, they faced the daily difficulties of living in unfamiliar circumstances in a small settlement with limited facilities and resources.

It appears that soon after their arrival in Florida, Arthur and Ella May became involved in a circle of friends who were leaders and “movers and shakers” in their new community. Ella May is smiling in many of the photos taken in Florida, which seems to indicate that she was enjoying her new environment, even with all of its challenges.

Cam and Don are shown at the right, standing in the front yard of their Florida home. In that frontier setting they learned to use the jackknife, gun and hatchet as tools and for recreation. There was no shortage of rocks in the area, and sometimes for fun the lads used a sling, made with a leather shoe tongue, to fling rocks at the roof of the local packing house. Living on the edge of the Everglades as young boys must have been a very exciting and fascinating experience.



We do not know the financial results of Arthur’s Florida farming endeavor, but in 1915, soon after their return to Detroit, he and Ella May built a new brick home. Their place was in the now historic Indian Village area on the east side of Detroit. If tomato farming profits were meager, perhaps Arthur produced some additional income through related activities such as speculation in the Florida land boom of the day.

Finally, we descendants of Arthur Robb and Ella May Cunningham are fortunate to have access to many documents relating to their Florida experience, including Ella May’s photographs. Seeing all of the of the information together gives us a much better understanding of the challenges of daily life that the A. R. Cunningham family and the other Detroiters faced as they farmed on the edge of the Everglades in 1911.