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Florida Revealed: Dispatches From the Land of Publix, Citrus, and Alligators

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As a result of the transient nature of Florida's population today, it can be difficult to find someone whose family can claim Florida roots for more than a couple generations. That is why I am proud that my mother's family goes back to the 1820s in Hillsborough County. My great-grandparents were farmers in the Plant City area and it is that heritage which led me to begin the [*Florida Revealed*](#) blog.

In 2015 I joined the staff of the Matheson History Museum in Gainesville and was quickly overwhelmed by all that I did not know about Florida's history. Any spare time I had I would pick a drawer in our vertical files or a box in our archives and explore. It was through those times of discovery and our exhibitions that I began developing topics for the blog. I wanted to share with readers the fascinating and unique history that I was discovering as I researched. Everything from a room key at the former White House Hotel in Gainesville to historic postcards of the sponge markets in Tarpon Springs inspired posts.

There are so many things that make Florida stand out from the other 49 states – five different flags flew over it (Spain, France, Great Britain, the Confederate States of America, and the United States); while Native Americans had lived there for centuries, the population boom didn't begin until the citrus craze took off in the 1880s; its natural beauty is unparalleled in the contiguous United States. Through the *Florida Revealed* blog my goal is to do more than share facts. I want my readers to gain a new appreciation for the beautiful state of Florida and be reminded that it is more than beaches, theme parks, and mosquitoes.