

Frederick de Bary - The Florida Years

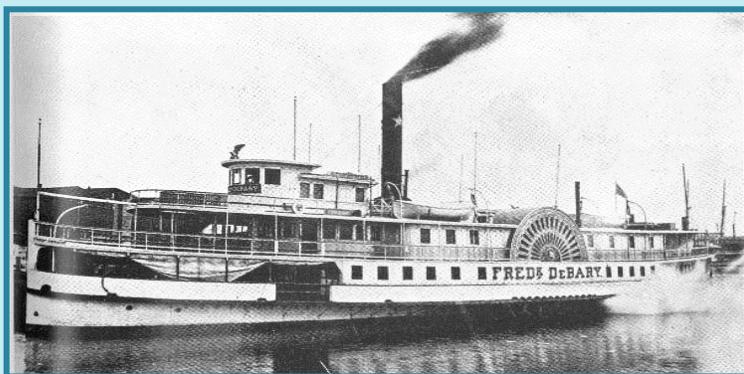


Samuel Frederick de Bary
1815 - 1898

Samuel Frederick de Bary was born January 12, 1815 in Frankfurt am Main, Hessen-Nassau, Prussia. His ancestors lived in Tournai in the province of French Hainaut, 52 miles southwest of Brussels (in the present Kingdom of Belgium). In the 16th century, the de Barys became French Huguenots (Calvinists). In 1576, Louis de Bary (Frederick's 6-great grandfather) immigrated to Cologne and, in 1583, immigrated to Frankfurt am Main (Main is a river).¹ Frederick de Bary married Julie Scherpenhausen on August 15, 1844 in Crefeld, Rheinland, Prussia; their children were Adolphe, Christian Frederick and Eugenie.

Frederick's first job was in Frankfurt as a salesman for a large manufacturer of dry goods.² P. A. Mumm, a wine producer in Cologne, employed de Bary to market their wines in America. In 1852, de Bary began his business in New York.³ He was the sole agent for P. A. Mumm, P. A. Mumm Giesler et Cie, later named G. H. Mumm et Cie in Reims, France; he also represented the Apollinaris Company Ltd. of London's mineral water, Hunyadi Janos' mineral water, A. Meller & Co.'s bordeaux and clarets, Geo. Baver & Co.'s cognac and brandies, and De Bary & Kling's Havana Segars. Frederick de Bary was a very successful businessman. The de Bary family owned homes in New York City and in Summit, New Jersey. On January 25, 1870, Julie de Bary died after a long illness at their home in New York.

In 1870, Frederick de Bary visited the east coast of Florida. The trip by steamboat from New York to Jacksonville took about ten days. From Jacksonville, de Bary traveled 161 miles south on the St. Johns River to a steamboat landing at a small town called Enterprise which was founded in 1841 and located on the east side of Lake Monroe. De Bary stayed at the 100-room Brock House located at the steamboat landing. The Brock House was built in 1855 by Captain Jacob Brock; owner of the Brock Line (steamboats). (From 1924 to 1937, the Brock House was called the Benson Springs Inn.) The Brock Line was the first steamboat line with scheduled travel between Enterprise and Jacksonville. Lake Monroe is a 9,406-acre lake located in the St. Johns River midway between the River's headwaters in St. Johns Marsh in North Indian River County and the River's Atlantic Ocean mouth which is 15 miles east of Jacksonville at the jetties at Mayport. The St. Johns River is the longest river in Florida and one of the few rivers in North America that flow in a northerly direction.



Steamboat FRED^K DeBARY



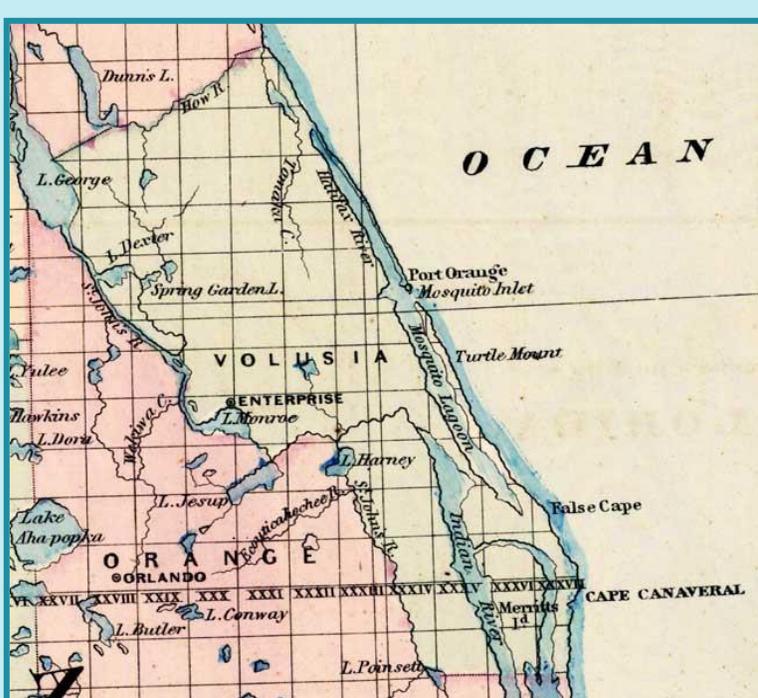
Steamboat ANITA



Steamboat CITY of JACKSONVILLE

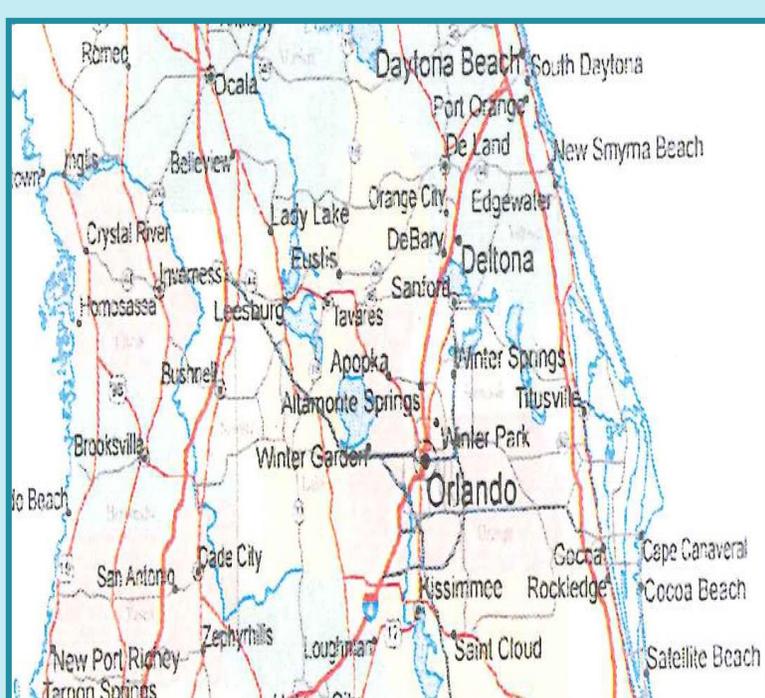


Steamboat ROSA



Asher & Adams' Florida 1871

<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/maps>

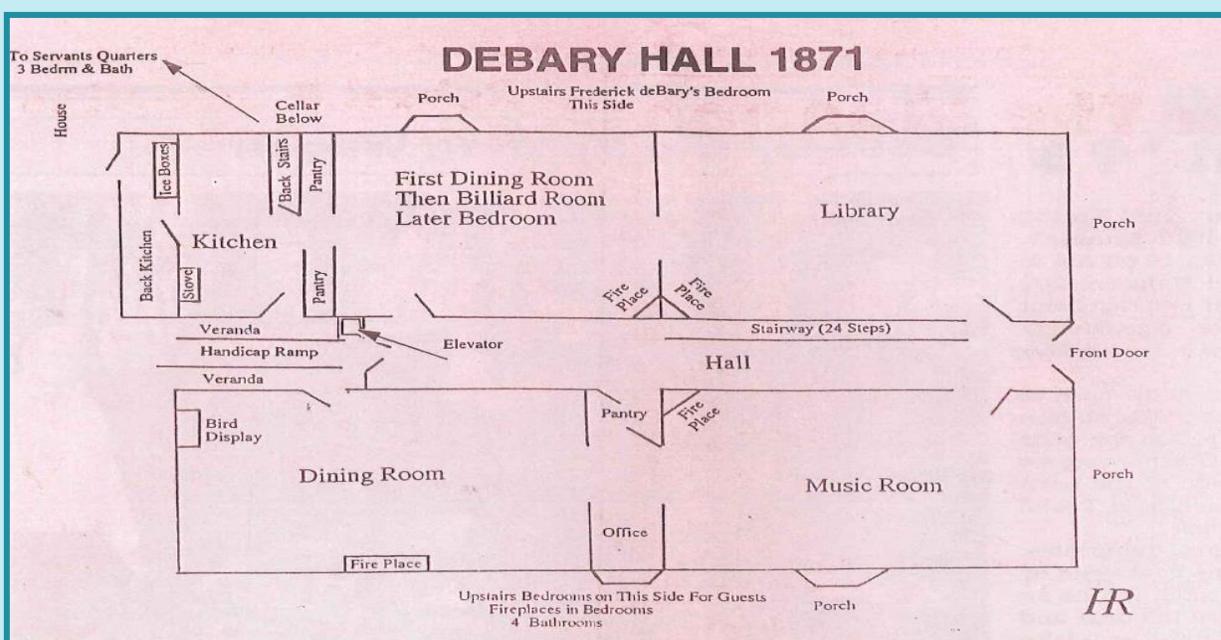


City of DeBary 1993

Midway between Daytona Beach and Orlando

On January 4, 1871, de Bary purchased land on high ground overlooking the north shore of Lake Monroe. The land was located in Enterprise which was the County of Volusia seat. Previous owners of the land were Elijah Watson, who sold the land to Oliver and Amanda Arnett, who then sold the land to de Bary. Growing on this land were orange, camphor, bamboo, and other exotic shrubs and plants with a variety of wildlife. De Bary's property was located at the point of the St. Johns River, at Lake Monroe, where it deepens and widens and could accommodate the large steamboats from Jacksonville. On the high ground which was less than a mile from Lake Monroe, Frederick de Bary built an 8,000 sq. ft. two-story Italianate-styled southern plantation house with a two-story veranda on three sides. De Bary called it a hunting lodge. The house was built of cypress with 20 rooms, each with a fireplace. The house had a wine cellar, library, elevator and a ten-lid wood stove. Also built were an outside dancing pavilion, a stable, a greenhouse, an insulated ice house, laundry house with a water tower, a large fountain, quarters for servants, golf course, tennis courts, a spring-fed swimming pool, and a sugar mill that was erected on what is now known as DeBary Creek. A packing house was built just east of a trail to Watson's Landing on DeBary Creek.

From the Sanford Herald, Sanford, Florida. Published on March 14, 1996.



**Frederick de Bary and family 1878
DeBary Hall, Florida**



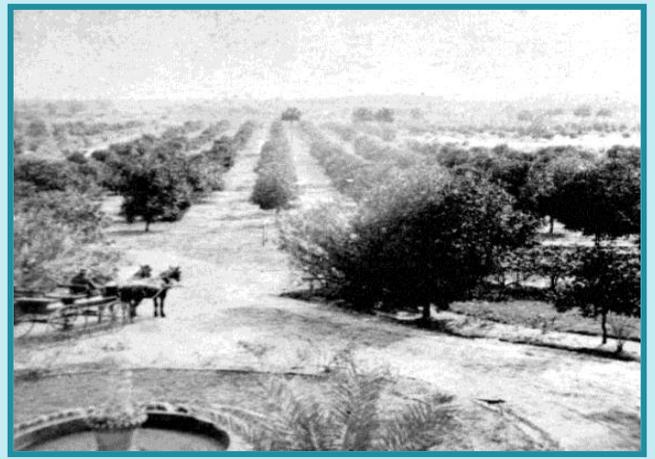
**de Bary's Swimming Pool.
Made of cypress with a flow well pool.
Later made of concrete.**

<http://floridamemory.com/items/show/152363>



Mr. de Bary and Mr. Rosseter in the back of the wagon and Mr. Padgett with cousin in the front.

<http://floridamemory.com/items/show/12343>



View of groves from the porch of the de Bary home.

<http://floridamemory.com/items/show/138717>

In 1870, when de Bary arrived in Florida, the population of the State of Florida was 187,748. (In 1880: 269,493 and, in 1890: 391,422.)⁴ Steamboats were mainly used to carry freight and crops to market. After the American Civil War (1861-1865) more homesteaders were arriving; some coming overland but most by steamboat. Every year brought an increase of sightseers traveling to Florida from all parts of the United States: 150,000 travelers to Florida in the winter of 1884-85. They came to Florida to explore the wonders of a tropical climate; many came for health reasons. Land was purchased, businesses established, existing villages grew, and new cities sprang up: The long Florida boom in tourism and growth had begun.

The travelers came to Jacksonville and then traveled south on the St. Johns River through an exotic wilderness into the interior of Florida. Alongside the River lay a land of luxuriant beauty with colorful blossoming trees and shrubs. They saw groves of live oak, eastern red cedar, bald cypress, silver saw palmetto palms, sand pines, and southern magnolias. (See the 18th century Journals of John Bartram and William Bartram.)⁵



Dahoon Holly



Sand Pine



Magnolia Grandiflora



Scrub Jay



Dixie Iris



Sabal Palm



White Ibis



Red-tailed Hawk



Bald Cypress



Blue Heron

Native wildlife included White Egrets, Blue Herons, Osprey, White Ibis, White-tailed Deer, Wild Turkeys, Panthers, Black Bears, River Otters, Gray Foxes, Florida Bob Cats and an abundance of fish of many varieties along with the Gopher Tortoises, Manatees, and roaring American Alligators. The pleasant climate, combined with hunting, fishing, and fascinating scenery, made visiting Florida an unusual and delightful experience.



Florida Black Bear



Gopher Tortoise



Wild Turkey



Florida River Otter



Florida Deer



Florida Panther



Florida Bobcat



Florida Gray Fox



American Alligator

The de Bary family spent winters at the Hall where they hunted, fished, and explored the River by boats and the land by horses and hunting wagons; de Bary kept a stable of horses and dogs. A favorite activity at the Hall for de Bary's guests was to hold a jousting tournament with the winning Knight naming the Queen of the Tournament. He entertained European royalty, American presidents such as Chester A. Arthur (American President from 1881 to 1885), military, actors, and wealthy friends. The rest of each year was spent at family homes in New York City and Union, Summit, New Jersey and voyaging to Europe.

Frederick de Bary added more land to his property; eventually owning over 10,000 acres. He planted orange trees on land extending from the Hall to DeBary Creek. Wild orange trees would be budded with sweet orange trees. The trees usually begin bearing the third year from transplanting. By the fifth year, a grove will average 100 oranges to a tree. As the trees are set twenty feet apart, an acre contains about 100. A grove full bearing should average about 500 to the tree. Many trees, however, bear from 1000 to 3000 oranges. When packed, each box contained about 140 oranges.

Frederick de Bary also owned the area known as **Green Spring** on which he grew orange trees as a commercial crop. Green Spring is located at 994 Enterprise/Osteen Road which is 2.23 miles east of DeBary Hall and consists of 36 acres with a sulfur spring that is a milky green color. Native Americans, including the Mayaca and Seminoles, considered the land sacred because they thought the sulfur water in the spring had healing qualities. Today, Green Spring is owned and managed by the County of Volusia as a nature park with natural and paved trails, scenic overlooks, a playground and picnic pavilions. **Green Spring Park** will be the first trailhead on the new East Central Regional Rail Trail. The Trail will travel more than 50 miles from Enterprise to Edgewater and on to Titusville. By March 2012, the first 5.7 miles of the Trail were completed.



In March 1876, Frederick de Bary purchased the first of his steamboats, the *George M. BIRD*. The *BIRD* was used for hunting expeditions, to entertain de Bary's guests, and to carry the orange crops to Jacksonville where they would be off-loaded and put onto ships heading up the eastern seaboard. In 1879, de Bary purchased the side-wheeler *ROSA* and, in January 1881, he registered the *BIRD* and the *ROSA* as the *De Bary Merchants' Line*. In 1881, de Bary purchased the side-wheeler *FLORENCE* from Charles Brock who was the son of Jacob Brock owner of the Brock Hotel in Enterprise. De Bary would later change the name *FLORENCE* to *ANITA* in honor of his granddaughter. In 1882, the side-wheeler *FREDERICK De BARY* joined the Line as did the magnificent *CITY of JACKSONVILLE* and the freight hauler *WELAKA*.⁶

In 1881, Frederick de Bary, among others, was interested in establishing a church in Enterprise. It was decided to construct the All Saints Episcopal Church Enterprise on land donated by Lester Clark and located at 155 Clark Street in Enterprise. Many donated funds while de Bary donated virgin timber, longleaf and curly pine, and cypress for the construction. The Church was completed in 1883 and on May 3, 1974 was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.⁷



On March 28, 1883, the *De Bary Merchants' Line* and *Baya's Line*, which was owned by Col. Hanero T. Baya, merged to become the *DeBary-Baya Merchants' Line*.⁸ Steamboat Captain William B. Watson would become General Manager (de Bary's land purchase was next to land owned by Capt. Watson). With 13 steamers, the company would become the largest and most successful steamboat line on the St. Johns River. The steamboats ran daily Jacksonville to Enterprise and also north on the Sea Island Route. On October 13, 1889, the Line was sold to the Clyde Steamship Company which was headquartered in New York.

From The Florida Dispatch, January 18, 1886 Jacksonville, FL⁹

INJURY FROM FROST.

How to Save the Orange Trees

We give full currency and endorsement to the following timely letter from Commodore Watson to the Times Union:

"Before taking charge of the DeBary line of steamers I had charge of Mr. DeBary's grove at Enterprise, and also owned quite a large one of my own. Both of these groves I believe I saved in 1880-81 by heavy pruning after the freeze of that winter. I had men go through the groves and cut off all the young and tender growth down to the hard, firm wood, and in some instances, where the trees were young, cut the entire top away. My idea was to get rid of the frozen sap before it had time to thaw and turn sour. I believe that if the owners of the groves will adapt the same treatment, and do it quick, before the sap has time to thaw, that the danger will be lessened 50 per cent. At all events, it acted like charm with me, and I give it for what it is worth.

W. B. Watson"

Jacksonville, January 12, 1885

The Florida winters of 1894-95 and 1898-99 had severe freezes which killed most of the orange trees in the state; the temperature dropping to 18 degrees as far south as the City of Titusville, a central Florida east coast city. The freezes brought an end to the orange crop industry in North Florida; the citrus industry gradually and successfully revived further south on the coast in the County of Brevard.

The decades of the 1860's, 70's, and 80's were known as the Steamboat Era in Florida. The Era gradually ended with the coming of the railroads to Florida. In 1870, only 446 miles of railroads existed in Florida; by 1880: 518 miles, by 1890: 2,489 miles, and by 1900 3,234 miles of railroad track existed in Florida.

Frederick de Bary died of a stroke on Wednesday, December 28, 1898 at his summer home in Summit, New Jersey. His great granddaughter Leonie Brewster was the last American heir to the property. On May 9, 1941, Leonie and her husband Benjamin Brewster died in a plane crash while traveling from Long Island to Philadelphia.

The Hall and the land located at 210 Sunrise Blvd. were sold several times until 1967 when the State of Florida designated the mansion as an Historic Memorial; placing an Historic Marker on the property on June 16, 1968. On July 24, 1972, the Hall was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In July 1990, the County of Volusia leased the mansion from the State of Florida to function as an historic museum and park with events and tours. By this time, the mansion had begun to deteriorate. In January 1991, local historian Arthur Franke formed a group, *De Bary Hall Incorporated*, which was dedicated to the restoration of the mansion. In behalf of the restoration, DeBary resident Peg McAllister and other residents held numerous fundraisers such as weekend festivals, dinner and dancing events, and rummage sales. Funds for the restoration were received from the County of Volusia, the State of Florida, and the City of DeBary. A full-scale renovation program of the mansion and grounds was undertaken which resulted in a 2002 Grand Opening of the historic Hall.

The restored mansion is a splendid example of classic 19th century architecture and is open to the public with tours by docents who introduce visitors to the history and to the elegance of DeBary Hall. <http://debaryhall.com/> On December 31, 1993, nearly 100 years after the death of Samuel Frederick de Bary, an area of 25 square miles, wherein stands his magnificent mansion, was incorporated as the *City of DeBary, Florida*.

In 1998, the Florida Department of State and the Florida League of Cities created a Great Floridian program. In 2000, Frederick de Bary was honored as a *Great Floridian*. The program recognizes and records the achievements of Floridians, living and deceased, who have made major contributions to the progress and welfare of the State of Florida.

¹ *Notice Genealogique & Historique sur la famille DE BARY originaire de Tournay, en Hainaut etablie depuis 1806 A Guebwiller, en Alsace 1877* par Alfred De Bary, Page 124.

² *America's Successful Men of Affairs*, Edited by Henry Hall, Vol. 1 The New York Tribune 1895, Page 172.

³ *Reports of the Committees of the House of Representatives made during the second session thirty-ninth Congress 1866-67 of the United States.*

⁴ *Records Project Florida Census Online.*

⁵ *Journals of John Bartram* <http://www.unf.edu/floridahistoryonline/Projects/Bartram.html>

Journals of William Bartram <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/naturalists/bartramw03.htm>

⁶ Edward A. Mueller, *Steamboating on the St. Johns 1830-1885*, The Kellersberger Fund of the South Brevard Historical Society, Melbourne, Florida 1980, Pages 81-87. <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/NF00000088/00001>

⁷ *All Saints Enterprise history* <http://allsaintsenterprise.org/history.html>

⁸ Spiderbites New York Times March 28, 1883.

⁹ University of Florida P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00055757/00003/9i>

Referral: Edith G. Brooks "Saga of Baron Frederick de Bary and De Bary Hall, Florida" 1968 is an interesting and lively description of life at DeBary Hall from 1871 to 1898.

Photos of DeBary Hall



Christmas at the mansion



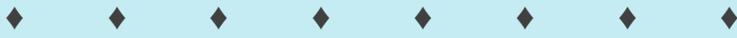
De Bary Hall Spring Festival
William (Bill) Joshua Dreggors, Jr. as Frederick de Bary



2010 4th of July Celebration



DeBary Hall



City of DeBary, Florida

