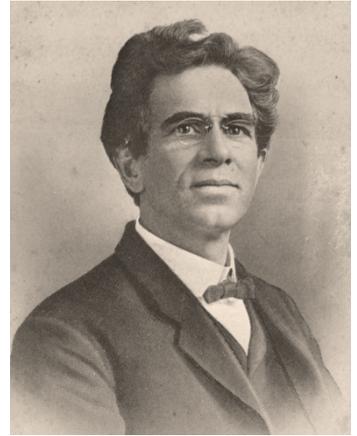


Poet Laureate: George Graham Currie (1867-1926)

A man of many talents and one of the great promoters of West Palm Beach and Palm Beach County was George Graham Currie. Born in Quebec, Canada, Currie was a traveler, lawyer, developer, newspaper reporter, and author. After traveling as a youth, Currie moved to New York and became a correspondent to cover the insurrection taking place in Cuba in the mid-1890s. While en route to Cuba, Currie stopped in Florida while trying to find transportation to Cuba, and he ended up in West Palm Beach. Currie stayed, studied law, and was admitted to the Florida Bar, practicing law in West Palm Beach from 1897-1925. As a real estate agent, he developed subdivisions in West Palm Beach and in Palm Beach County. To promote one of his subdivisions, Currie brought the first airplane to West Palm Beach in 1911. Currie also wrote poetry and published several books of his poems. According to *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (1926), Currie was known as the “poet laureate of Florida.”



Delray to Prosper In Spite of the Devil

by George G. Currie

George Graham Currie. *Epitaphs, Epigrams and other Ephemera*. Jacksonville: The Drew Press, 1912.

(An application of the art of poetry to the science of developing real estate. Delray is a Michigan colony located 18 miles south of Palm Beach, Florida, and owing to its central location close to the Everglades, is rapidly forging ahead. It is the author's pleasure to own some Earth at Delray, and in developing the same, the following verse was an advertisement.)

The Devil came to see me one night in my dreams,
And addressed me with fire in his eye,
And asked me why I was frustrating his schemes,
And assured me his vengeance was nigh.

With the utmost of meekness I told the old gent,
He surely had made some mistake;
I had no intent to do aught he'd resent
And I could not recall any “break.”

Said he (and his words fairly sizzled with heat)
“You are helping to prosper my foe;
“You are building up places where I have no seat—
“And where I'm denied the least show.”

“Denied the least show! Where you have no seat!
“What mean you great Satan I pray?”
“I mean,” and blue flames seemed to stream from
His feet, “*You are making a town of Delray!*”

“Me make a town! Don't fool yourself Nick,
“I'm simply the handmaid of Fate.”
“Too true,” said the Devil, “and that makes me sick,
“And is why I now threaten my hate.”

“So remember, though Hell cannot stop Delray's growth
“Because it is bound to succeed.
“Unless *you* desist (and then followed an oath)
“I'll get knockers to make you give heed.”

“Then,” said I, “If Delray is dead sure of success,
“I care not a straw for your threat:
“Let the knockers begin with their knocks and their din,
“I can stand it if they can *you bet.*”

With this parting thrust I awoke, and behold!
Old Nick had quite vanished away;
But he made good this threat, for his agents are yet
Knocking vainly *Fast Growing Delray.*