



**January 22, 1912**

**Completion of the Over-the-Sea Railroad to Key West**

On January 22 of 1912, the first official train of the Florida East Coast Railway extension rolled into Key West carrying Henry Flagler and other dignitaries. The “over-the sea railroad” was the product of years of labor battling mosquitoes, hurricanes, and heat to extend the FEC across the Florida Keys 156 miles from Miami to Key West. Eventually the overseas railroad became a motorway, the same route visitors use to get to Florida’s southernmost city today.

According to Frank Chesebro’s diary entry for January 22, his son Harry Chesebro and sister and brother in law Libby and Elmon Evarts accompanied Henry Flagler et al. on their trip to Key West on that fateful day in 1912. (So did 61 of Frank’s roosters.)

*Mon, Jan.22: H. Lib & E. off to Key West. Sent 61 roosters 204# [pounds?]*

In July, Frank and wife Nettie took the new train to Key West on a two day trip. Cost of fare for two: \$19.80.

*Wed, July 10: Men hauled ties from R.R. Esther & I went on excursion to Key West 197 miles. Left here at 7:15. Arrived at 4. Stayed at Mrs. Wolfe’s 525. Fleming St. Went to morning picture show.*

*Thurs, July 11: Viewed the town & started back at 3 12 cars. To Miami at 9:15 Home at 1. just ahead of rain.*

[From F. Chesebro’s account ledger]:

*10 Jul (1912) Fare to Key West excursion \$19.80*



*Souvenir brought back by Harry Chesebro from the FEC extension celebrations in Key West in 1912.*