

TAMPA BAY HOTEL

FIRE PROOF

PRIVATE OFFICE

TAMPA, FLA.

DAVIS ISLAND

Davis' story as they tell it in Tampa, is one of the best in the long list of city builders. He was born in Tampa but learned the real estate business in Miami where, before the boom, he put on successfully a small subdivision. I have heard people say, indeed, that Davis started the boom in Miami. He watched Carl Fischer making solid land islands and beach by pumping up sand and remembered a sand bar in Tampa Bay where as a boy he used to play pirate. Why not turn that into solid land? He came to Tampa to see about it but the conservative element like Mr. Peter Knight turned a cold shoulder upon it. Davis went ahead, bought the sand bars for a song and persuaded the city to allow him to pump up sand from the Bay. As soon as the first dredges went to work he put a division of this island which was to be on the market and people stood in crowds for a chance to buy, ninety per cent of them residents of Tampa. He pumped up more sand put on a second division and it was the same story. When he came to the fourth in October of 1925 just as after the first announcement he sold the whole division in _____, An acquaintance of Davis' told that after the sale was over the realtor telephoned him to come over. When they were alone Davis opened a drawer piled full of checks. "There is five million dollars," he said, "paid down on land that we have not got." "Pump up another division" the realtor said. "No, we will have to give them back their money." I gave back eight million dollars before the flood stopped.