

'Half Gator, Half Long Horn'

Genial George Davis Home, Anxious to See His Friends

Featuring a wide grin and a wide brim hat, George Davis was home in Tampa this week, explaining to his many old friends that he is now "half gator, half long horn."

The exuberant, friendly son of the late Capt. Ben Davis drove from his 8000-acre ranch near Raymondville, Tex., with his wife and three sons. His main vacation aim was to visit everyone he knew in Tampa and vicinity, a strenuous job, even on his round-the-clock schedule.

He likes Texas. "Almost as much as Florida, and vice versa," he declared. How was he doing? "Well, I retired my cattle after a four-year dry spell—worst in many a year," he began.

"Then I planted cabbage and we had the worst freeze in 20 years last Winter."

Like a Census Taker

Cotton is next on the list, and Mr. Davis figures that should do well—if nothing happens.

A former Plant High School football star, he is a familiar figure to practically everyone in Hillsborough County. After completion of the Davis Causeway, built by his father, George Davis took up a four-year station at the causeway (now Campbell Courtney Causeway) toll house.

"Those were the years," he declared. "I bet I saw more people than a census taker, and liked practically every one of them."

He went to Texas when the causeway was sold to the State Department. That was in 1945. "But we had to get to live on the ranch for two years after that," Davis said. "We had to wait for the carpenters to sober up. They had to be able to go to work and make the pipes to break."

Ardent Hunter

An enthusiastic member of the Optimist and American Legion, Mr. Davis is also a staunch supporter of longer hunting seasons.

"I wouldn't want you for the game warden to know for many months I hunt," he laughed. "But I lose 25 pounds during the season, so that may give you the idea."

His philosophy is based on the idea that happiness is a state of mind which can be maintained if you try hard enough.

The deeply-tanned Mr. Davis says his Texas ranch an excellent place for it. "The cities are too crowded and that's a basic cause of ulcers, and broken hearts," he said. "People should live in the country more and get away from psychiatrization."

Recommends Laughter

He also maintains that laughter is the world's best morale med-



GEORGE DAVIS

icine. "Everyone should greet everyone else with a smile—even if it's a Republican smile," he declared. "And laugh at their jokes, even if the laughter is hysterical."

"Also," he added, "and this is important, it is no good to worry about money, because there is no such thing as security."

Mr. and Mrs. Davis' three boys are George 14; Ben, 12, and Harry, two and a half. "Two of them were born in Florida and one in Texas," their father explained. "The Gators lead, two to one."

During World War II, Mr. Davis volunteered, at 38, for the U. S. Marine Corps. "But they wouldn't let me play cowboys and Indians with the Japs," he complained. "I was retired to the old people's home at Parris Island."

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