

House Histories LLC — © [REDACTED]  
House History Report — [REDACTED] Avenue, Coral Gables, FL —  
29 March 2026

[REDACTED] Avenue,  
Coral Gables, FL 33134

---

A House History Report by House Histories LLC



[REDACTED] Avenue as it appeared in 1926.  
(William Arthur Fishbaugh, Photographer. Florida Memory, State Archives of Florida)

# THE RESIDENCE

**Colonel (Retired) Percy [REDACTED]  
and  
Lydia [REDACTED]  
Owners from 1923 to 1946**

Colonel Percival [REDACTED] and his wife Lydia [REDACTED] are the first documented owners of the property located at [REDACTED] Avenue in Coral Gables, Florida.

## **Percy's Childhood and Youth**

Percy (his chosen name) was born on July 9, 1857 in Newnan, Georgia, some 40 miles to the southwest of Atlanta. His parents were Dr. John Henry [REDACTED] and Catharine Cole [REDACTED]; Percy was their only child. After Percy's birth, John and Catharine, along with their young son, moved to Crawfordville, Georgia, east of Atlanta, where Catharine's family home was located.

When the U.S. Civil War began, Percy's father supported the Confederacy and served in the Confederate Army as a surgeon, with the rank of Captain. Percy's mother was widowed during the war. Having a young son to support, Catharine took on two jobs: one teaching school and the other as postmistress of her community.

In those days it was common for young children to receive their education at home from their parents. Percy was no exception, as he was homeschooled by his mother as a young boy. Later he received schooling outside of the home before eventually attending the University of Georgia in Athens, where he completed coursework up to his junior year.

Percy's mother Catharine remarried in 1868 to George ██████████ assuming his surname as Catharine Cole ██████████. In 1871, George and Catharine had a son whom they named Frank. Catharine was friends with another Crawfordville resident: Alexander Hamilton Stephens, Vice President of the Confederate States of America from 1861 to 1865. Stephens, who owned a large plantation house in Crawfordville, remained active politically after the war and went on to serve as U.S. Congressman and, later, Governor of the State of Georgia.

As Stephens' friend, Catharine wrote to him to ask that her son Percy be appointed either to the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York or to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Stephens granted Catharine's request and appointed Percy to West Point. Entering as a cadet on June 14, 1876, Percy graduated four years later, at the age of 23, with a rank of Second Lieutenant. He was assigned to the 10th Cavalry of the United States Army.

## **The American Indian Wars**

When Percy entered service, the American Indian Wars were still active, particularly in the remote western regions of the U.S. territory, where Anglo settlers actively occupied areas in which Native Americans lived. Percy's regiment was dispatched to Fort Concho, Texas — a particularly wild and dangerous frontier in the American Southwest — to protect settlers from attacks by Apache and Comanche warriors. In keeping with social divisions of the time, the soldiers who served under Percy's command were Black men and were known as Buffalo Soldiers — a name most likely given by Native Americans, in reference to the large, heavy coats they wore that were made from the hide and hair of buffalo, in order to stay warm.



An 1890 image of Buffalo Soldiers.  
(Chr. Barthelmess, Photographer. U.S. Library of Congress)

Percy engaged in numerous skirmishes and battles during his time of service in the 10th Cavalry. In addition to their peacekeeping efforts, the Cavalrymen helped build and patrol local roads, made sure that U.S. mail could travel through the area safely, and helped scout and map the area. Fort Concho today is a National Historic Landmark, reflecting the important role it played in the settling of the American Southwest.

After the completion of his posting at Fort Concho, Percy and his regiment were transferred to Fort Davis, another important fort also located in west Texas. At Fort Davis, Percy and his fellow Cavalrymen fought against Victorio, a famed Apache Chief. Percy's men successfully pushed Victorio and his warriors into Mexico, where Victorio later was killed by Mexican soldiers in the mountainous area south of El Paso, Texas. Today, Fort Davis is a National Historic



Mounted Buffalo Soldiers circa 1886.  
(Edgar A. Mearns, Photographer.  
U.S. National Park Service)

Site within the National Park Service.

Following their campaign against Victorio, Percy and his regiment moved to nearby Fort Stockton, again to patrol the region and deter Apache attacks. The soldiers also protected travel routes, escorted wagon trains,

ensured the safe delivery of U.S. mail and helped build fortifications at the Fort. Fort Stockton, too, today enjoys placement on the National Register of Historic Sites.

Percy's regiment subsequently was sent to Fort Thomas, Arizona, located to the southeast of Phoenix — a long and arduous journey made by foot. While stationed at Fort Thomas, Percy fought in 1881 against renowned Apache leader Geronimo and his warriors. Geronimo evaded capture by U.S. forces until 1886, when he was finally forced to surrender.

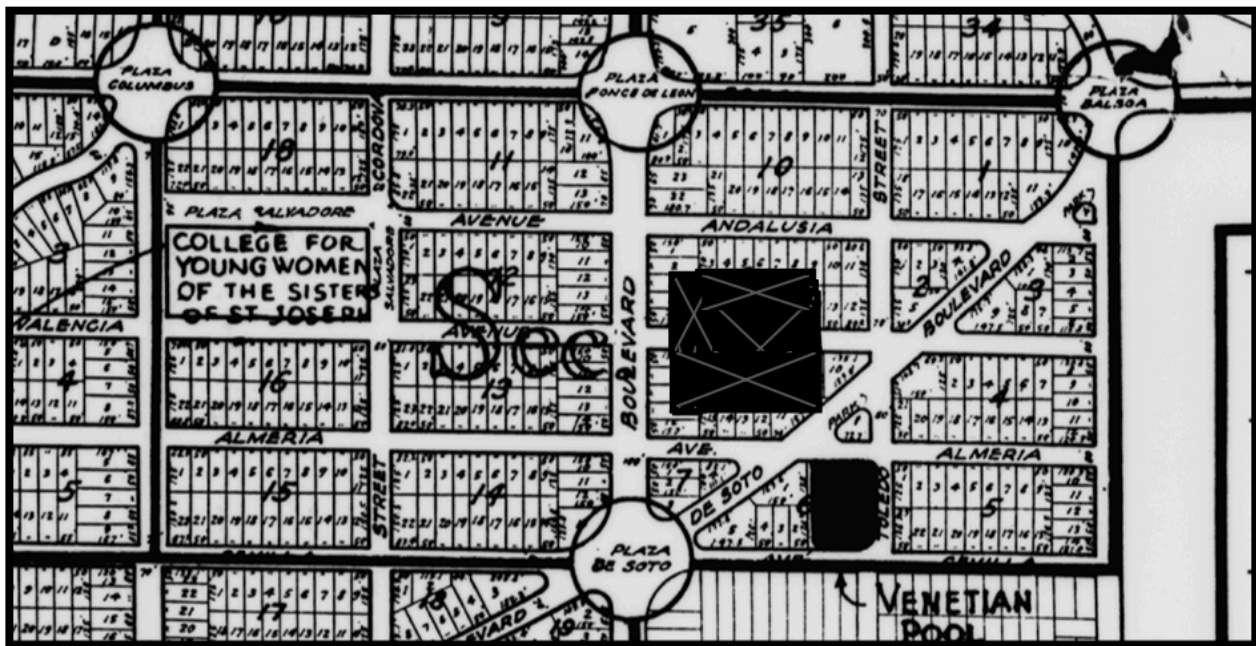


Geronimo in 1887 after his 1886 capture.  
(Warfare History Network)

## The Road To Coral Gables

Percy's military career caused the family to live in many different places at home and abroad. In the 1900 U.S. Census, they are documented as living in Manzanillo, Cuba; in the 1910 U.S. Census, they lived in Kinney County, Texas. After Percy's retirement from the U.S. Military in 1918, the 1920 U.S. Census shows Percy and Lydia as living in Saint Petersburg, Florida.

By 1923, the [REDACTED] are documented as having made several visits to Coral Gables while maintaining a residence at 733 Peachtree Street in Atlanta. That year, Lydia purchased Lot [REDACTED] of Block [REDACTED] in the newly created Section [REDACTED] of Coral Gables for \$1,500. The sellers were Coral Gables' founder, George E. Merrick, and his wife Eunice Merrick. Section [REDACTED] of Coral Gables was carved from the original Coral Gables Plantation, which the Merrick family owned.



An enlarged section of a map showing the Section [REDACTED] neighborhood of Coral Gables.  
(Historic American Buildings Survey, U.S. Library of Congress)