Wild Florida: Tourism before Disney, Exhibit Brochure

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The identity of CRM is unknown, but in 1892 he was eight years old and these diaries were kept by his mother. There are seven volumes which start in March of 1892 and end in February 1893. The diary begins with a Steamship ride from Charleston, South Carolina to Cocoa, Florida. The young boy and his family are living in a three bedroom house with possibly two other siblings and an Uncle somewhere between Cocoa and Rockledge. During this time the diaries describe C.R.M.’s studies in writing and reading, his first solo ride on a horse, and his eighth birthday as well as all the gifts he received and who they were from.
Charles Shipman was a naturalist particularly interested in plants and bird life. His journals document his time spent in Florida through hand-colored photographs. He was encouraged to continue his study of nature through contact with Frank Chapman, Henry Fairfield Osborn, Theodore Roosevelt, John Burroughs, and Louis Agassiz Fuertes. He was also a member of the Brooklyn Camera Club and won several national and international awards for his photographs. This first volume documents Shipman’s 1908 trip to Florida, beginning with photographs of a New York tugboat and several photos of Charleston. The bulk of the journal depicts Florida scenes with a total of 85 photographs that are all hand-tinted by the author. Interleaved are mimeographs of Shipman’s journal. In these pages he describes his journey from New York to Florida and tells stories of his life on the boat as well as documents the plants and animals he comes into contact with, including his first encounter with alligators along the side of the boat.

Florida Ephemera Collection

The Florida Ephemera Collection consists of materials about or produced in Florida collected by Thomas and Georgine Mickler through their mail-order business, Mickler’s Antiquarian Books, as well as additional purchases made by the University of Central Florida Libraries Special Collections. These materials are all related in some way to Florida, either geographically or through the subject matter. The collection includes tourism brochures, information on local historical societies, local business advertisements, and newspaper clippings. It also houses journals, diaries, and literature related to Florida.

Tourism in Florida before Disney

Tourism in Florida didn’t start with Disney World, it had a lively history that we still enjoy today. There were alligator shows, trips to the beach, visiting citrus orchards, and exploring the edges of the Everglades. This exhibit selects samples of some of this Florida history.

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