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Pensacola                      *Assistant Editor*, Jacksonville

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1926

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\* \* \* To explore the field of Florida history, to seek  
and gather up the ancient chronicles in which its annals are  
contained, to retain the legendary lore which may yet throw  
light upon the past, to trace its monuments and remains, to  
elucidate what has been written, to disprove the false and sup-  
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olden time, to keep and preserve all that is known in trust  
for those who are to come after us, to increase and extend the  
knowledge of our history, and to teach our children that  
first essential knowledge, the history of our State, are objects  
well worthy of our best efforts. To accomplish these ends we  
have organized the Historical Society of Florida.

GEORGE R. FAIRBANKS.

*Saint Augustine, April, 1857*

## THE GROWTH OF FLORIDA'S ELECTION LAWS

One of the neglected phases of American history is the development of election laws in the different states. Several monographs have been written showing the evolution and progress of certain reforms, such as the introduction of the Australian ballot, in the country as a whole, but these are usually not explicit and often not reliable regarding the subject in individual states. Articles and monographs on elections in each state are needed. It is entirely true that to obtain an accurate view of this subject the final monograph must contain a survey of the record of development in all states, but it is just as true that necessary antecedents of such a work must be studies of election conditions in the several states, which together will form the bases of the final work. It is the purpose of this article to give a brief summary of the development of the election laws in Florida in the hope that future historians may give more detailed information about the causes and results of this development and may show more clearly its relations with similar movements in other states.

The history of Florida election laws has been a record of growth from comparatively simple machinery at the time that civil government was instituted in 1822, to the present complicated system, of primaries and general elections. In this respect, the state has simply followed the tendency of the times. One cause of the increasing complexity is not far to seek. As more offices were made elective, the more glaring became the abuses that crept into the elective process, with the result that elaborate laws were passed to safeguard democracy.

The beginning of the election laws of Florida was contained in the national statute <sup>1</sup> of March 30, 1822, giving the territory a civil government, and permitting the inhabitants to elect a delegate to the national Congress. Section 14 of this act contains the following, "The said delegate shall be elected by such description of persons, at such times, and under such regulations, as the governor and legislative council may, from time to time, ordain and direct". Accordingly, one of the early bills passed at the first session of the legislative council which began in July, 1822, was the first election law that Florida had <sup>2</sup>. Since this was the period when property qualifications for suffrage were becoming unpopular in many states, it occasions no surprise to find that all free white male inhabitants of the age of twenty-one or more, who had been residents in the territory when the United States took control in 1821, and all white male citizens of the United States of the age of twenty-one or more, who resided in the territory at the time of the passage of the act, were considered qualified voters. These provisions show that the spirit of so-called western democracy was rampant in Florida. So far as is known, the people of Florida were satisfied with these liberal suffrage qualifications in all particulars except one. They objected strenuously to the inclusion of soldiers and sailors in the list of voters. <sup>3</sup> Apparently the United States government concurred in the objection, for Congress in March, 1823, passed a bill <sup>4</sup> which declared that "soldiers of the United States . . . shall under no circumstances be qualified to vote." It is interesting to note that the suffrage qualifications in Florida, as

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<sup>1</sup> 3 U. S. Statutes at Large, p. 654 ff. <sup>2</sup> 1822, Acts of the Legislative Council, p. 9 ff. This session was held in Pensacola. <sup>3</sup> See See Caroline Mays Brevard (J. A. Robertson, ed.) : A History of Florida from the Treaty of 1763 to our own Times" (DeLand, Florida, 1924), Vol. 1, pp. 74-75. <sup>4</sup> 3 U. S. Statutes at Large, p. 754 ff.

well as the qualifications for holding offices, have remained practically on this broad general basis ever since.<sup>5</sup> The election machinery, provided for in the act of the council of 1822, was very simple. The governor<sup>6</sup> was authorized to select the polling places and to appoint two judges of elections for each polling place, who were in their turn to appoint a clerk to assist them. Two poll books were to be provided for recording the votes, one of which was to be given after the election to the sheriff of the county, and the other was to be open for inspection by the citizens. The poll was open for three consecutive days, and voting was *viva voce*. The nucleus of a corrupt practices act may be seen in the provision that all judges convicted of fraud were liable to heavy fines.

Three features of this first election law were modified or eliminated in 1823. *Viva voce* voting was displaced by the ballot, but no particular kind was specified.<sup>7</sup> This was in harmony with the practice in all of the neighboring states.<sup>8</sup> The judges were required to provide a ballot box into which one of them was to place the ballot immediately upon its receipt from the voter. At the end of each day (the balloting continued three days as before), the votes were to be publicly counted and recorded in a book. This method of voting led to two further provisions to prevent fraud, the public recording of the name of each person after he had voted, and the throwing out of ballots, if two or more were folded together. The latter provision, of course, indicates the danger of stuffing the ballot box

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<sup>5</sup> This statement should probably be qualified. The law at present specifically disfranchises idiots, criminals, etc., but these were undoubtedly disqualified in the early days, even if the law did not state it. <sup>6</sup> He was appointed by the President. <sup>7</sup> 1823 Acts, p. 91. <sup>8</sup> See Eldon Cobb Evans: *A History of the Australian Ballot System in the United States* (University of Chicago Press, 1917, p. 5.



so long as each voter could prepare his own ballot before coming to the polling place.

A second change in the election laws made in 1823 dealt with the election judges. Instead of being appointed by the governor, they were now chosen by the county judges,<sup>9</sup> and their number was raised to three for each polling place. The laws now specified the compensation of the judges at two dollars a day and the clerks at three dollars. The third modification made in 1823 related to the resident requirement of voters, who were now not permitted to vote before they had resided three months in the territory.

One other important change was made two years later. The polls were to be open for one day only.<sup>10</sup> Thus by the end of 1825, the foundations of the present-day election laws of Florida were fairly well laid: appointive election officials, democratic suffrage qualifications, one day balloting, the beginnings of the corrupt practices act, and voting by ballot. Thereafter no important change in the election laws was made for eighteen years.<sup>11</sup> During this long period, elective offices became ever more numerous. In 1826 the United States Congress gave Floridians the right to elect the legislative council,<sup>12</sup> and in 1829 all civil and military officers except those appointed by the President of the United States, and justices of the peace, and treasurer, and auditor.<sup>13</sup> In 1838, another group of offices was added when the legislature was made bicameral.<sup>14</sup>

Before considering the further development of the election laws, it may be well to digress and see through

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<sup>9</sup> The judges also designated the polling places. <sup>10</sup> 1825 Acts, p. 4 f. <sup>11</sup> In 1828 (see 1828 Acts, p. 248 ff.) a long election law was passed but it amounted to practically a codification of the earlier law. Its chief addition is a provision for the punishment of repeaters (see p. 256). <sup>12</sup> 4 U. S. Statutes at Large, pp. 164 ff.

the eyes of a contemporary naturalized American how an election was actually conducted in those early days. Achille Murat, a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, wrote the following description,<sup>15</sup> about the year 1830, on his plantation, Lipona, in Jefferson County -

To enjoy an election, however, a stranger must see it "al fresco" in the country. The day arrives - for several months the candidates and their friends have been actively engaged in canvassing, going from house to house, and settlement to settlement, full of persuasion, explanation, solicitation &c, until the poor elector becomes completely bewildered with promises. In general, the friends of the candidate give themselves more trouble than he himself. The Governor, by proclamation, has fixed the day, and divided the country into sections, in each of which he selects a central house, and appoints three election judges or scrutiners.<sup>16</sup> These three dignitaries of a day assemble at early dawn, and swear on kissing the Bible, to demean themselves with integrity, etc. They seat themselves at a table near the window. An old cigar box duly patched up, with a hole in the top, a sheet of paper, pen and bottle as an apology for an inkstand, form next to themselves, the prominent features of this august tribunal! Each elector presents himself at the window, gives his name, which is registered on the paper, deposits his ballot in the box which is presented to him, and retires. If the judges doubt the elector's qualifications (from age or residence), they put him on his oath. In the room itself, all is conducted with the greatest order; not so, however, without. The forest is encumbered with wagons and horses. The electors arrive in squadrons, laughing and singing, not unfrequently half so-and-so<sup>17</sup> since the commencement of their morning's ride, when they become eloquently vociferous in praise of their favorite candidate. The candidates, or their friends, present themselves to the electors on their arrival, and pounce upon them with ballots already prepared and often printed, which only exposes them to the rough railleries of the countrymen. Hardly is one arrived, before he is questioned as

<sup>13</sup> 4 U. S. Statutes at Large, p. 333. <sup>14</sup> 5 U. S. Statutes at Large, p. 263 f. <sup>15</sup> Achille Murat: *America and the Americans* (New York, 1849), pp. 55-57. There is an earlier (English) edition of this work, published in 1833 under the title, *Moral and Political Sketch of the United States of North America*. <sup>16</sup> Murat errs. In his time the judges were appointed by the county courts, see above. <sup>17</sup> drunk.

to his vote and is either greeted with applause, or hooted, according to his opinions. If an influential man presents himself at the poll, he announces his opinion in a short address, the clamor ceases, for a moment, while his "sweet discourse" wins over a party to his principles, and nobody presumes to molest him. The whiskey, however, (not exactly the "nectar of the gods"), all this time is going its rounds; towards evening all have, more or less, disposed of their sober qualities, and it is rare that the sovereign people abdicate power without a general set-to, where nobody can be heard, and from which all who claim the enviable distinction of possessing a vehicle take very good care to keep aloof. Each now goes home; the judges examine the votes, and transmit the result to the capitol. On the following morning, friend and foe, conqueror and conquered, become good friends, as if nothing had happened; so much so, that a little rough encounter has been known to make the best friends imaginable. Vox populi, vox Dei, is here an absolute axiom; where all have been taught from earliest infancy to yield to the majority. It must be observed, that the public interest suffers not in the least for this tumult, because, generally, before voting each has long previously made his mind up, as to who shall be his favorite; and be he drunk or sober, at the election, he adheres to his resolution. The excitement of an election passes off rapidly; before it takes place, it forms the general topic of conversation, but on the following morning it is no more talked about, nor thought of, than the Great Mogul.<sup>18</sup>

Since 1843 the chief developments in election laws have been along four main lines : the form of the ballot, greater precision in defining corrupt practices, more exact definition of suffrage qualifications, and, quite recently, the regulation of political parties in the nomination of their candidates. In order to follow the more readily the development in these particulars, each of them will be discussed separately.

In 1843, the legislative council codified and changed slightly the laws relating to elections.<sup>19</sup> One

<sup>18</sup> Call Long: *Florida Breezes* (Jacksonville, 1882), p. 185 ff. has a description of a Florida election held about 1835. Internal evidence, however, would seem to indicate that she drew her account almost entirely from Murat. <sup>19</sup>1843 Acts, pp. 3-14.

of the most striking innovations in this act was the introduction of a more nearly definite description of the ballots which were to be used. They were to be paper tickets containing the name or names of the candidates for which the elector wanted to vote, and the names of the offices. The outside of each ballot when folded, should have the name of the office written or printed upon it; but failure to comply with the requirement was not to cause disfranchisement. It was provided that there should be as many ballot boxes as there were offices and that the ballots should be placed in the proper boxes, although none in a wrong box should be rejected, if properly endorsed.

No changes were made in the form of the ballot when Florida became a state in 1845.<sup>20</sup> After a lapse of almost twenty years, in 1862, a provision was enacted that each ballot must be numbered so as to correspond with the number given to the elector in the poll book.<sup>21</sup> This act, violating the secrecy of voting, was repealed in 1864.<sup>22</sup> When the reconstructionists took hold of the state in 1868, a law was passed that all candidates voted for by an elector should appear on one ballot and no more.<sup>23</sup> Another provision in the same law attempted to nullify the evils of repeating. It was ordered that if the number of ballots cast exceeded

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<sup>20</sup> A new act was passed (see 1845 Acts, pp. 77-88, adjourned session). This, however, is practically a reaffirmation of the act of 1843.<sup>21</sup> 1862 Acts, p. 22.<sup>22</sup> 1864 Acts, p. 26.<sup>23</sup> 1868 Acts, p. 5. Whether the multiple ballot had been used the entire time between 1843 and 1868 is very doubtful. In 1852 a law was passed for the purpose of simplifying elections (see 1852 Acts, p. 118 ff.). Although the use of one ballot only is not specified, there is no mention of the multiple ballot, nor of multiple ballot boxes. The same is true of the 1862 law (see 1862 Acts, p. 22). This law provides that all names of candidates "for whom said person may be authorized by law to vote and the name of the office to which said voter may desire the person or persons for whom he votes to be elected, [shall be] written or printed on one and the same peice [sic] of paper." This rather ambiguous statement would seem to indicate that the multiple ballot was no longer used.

the number of voters, one of the inspectors should draw from the box enough ballots so that there would be no surplus.<sup>24</sup>

It is remarkable that no other changes in the ballot law were made during the entire troublesome reconstruction period and that only a minor one was made immediately after white supremacy had been reestablished, this being the requirement that the ballot was to be of plain white paper, blank on one side.<sup>25</sup>

Since 1877 three important changes have occurred in the ballot laws. In 1889 the requirement was made that ballots should not be more than six inches long, and two and one-half inches wide, and that they should be clear and even cut, without ornament, designation, mutilation, symbol or work of any kind except the name or names of those voted for.<sup>26</sup> The multiple ballot and ballot box system of 1843 was re-introduced with the added provision that all ballots found in the wrong boxes should be discarded. Since most of the negroes were illiterate, they did not know which box was the right one, although the law provided that each box should be plainly marked with the name of the office. As the Democratic election inspectors refused to direct the negroes, the vote of the latter was practically eliminated.<sup>27</sup> To make the election machinery still more elaborate, two polling places, one for national offices and the other for state and local offices, were now required in each precinct.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>This provision really aided the party in power, so long as the ballots of the different parties were not made of paper of the same texture. The inspector would be careful to draw out and thus the ballots of his political opponents. This practice was, according to old inhabitants, resorted to by both parties.<sup>25</sup> 1877 Acts, p. 71.

<sup>26</sup>1889 Acts, p. 101. <sup>27</sup>In 1888 the Republican candidate for governor received 26,485 votes, while in 1890, the party candidate for comptroller received only 4,711 votes. (From official election returns in the office of the Secretary of State, Tallahassee, Florida.) <sup>28</sup>The separate polling places were abolished in 1899 (see 1899 Acts, p. 73).

In 1895 the multiple ballot law was repealed and the present Australian ballot was introduced.<sup>29</sup> As its very nature required that all the ballots should be alike in texture and size, they were now printed under the supervision of the county commissioners and at public expense. The names of all candidates for all offices are now on one sheet without any party designation whatsoever. The order of the candidates' names is left to the discretion of the officer who has charge of the printing.

In 1909, when the state was making ever stricter regulations regarding the methods of nominating candidates by political parties,<sup>30</sup> the type of ballot to be used in primaries was prescribed.<sup>31</sup> The size of type and the quality of paper were to be in conformity with that used in general elections. In addition to this, each ballot was to have two stubs, each of them containing the words, "Official Ballot, Number \_\_\_\_\_." Ballots were to be numbered consecutively. The inspector was required to write the name of the voter on the upper stub and his own initials on the lower one. The lower stub was to remain attached to the ballot handed to the elector, but was detached before the ballot was put into the box. In 1913, a law was passed requiring the names of all candidates for an office to be printed in alphabetical order on the primary ballot.<sup>32</sup>

The second line of development in the election laws of Florida since 1843 relates to a greater precision in defining and penalizing corrupt practices. As we have seen, the first election law of the territory made a beginning in this direction. The act of 1843 devoted an entire section to the prohibition and penalization of perjury, neglect of duty, bribery, hindrance in vot-

<sup>29</sup>1895 *Acts*, p. 56 ff. <sup>30</sup> See below, on primaries.

<sup>31</sup>1909 *Acts*, p. 71 ff. <sup>32</sup>1913, *General Acts*, 242 ff.

ing, fraud, and the destruction of ballots.<sup>33</sup> In 1845 this section was extended and enlarged.<sup>34</sup> From that time on, the laws have become ever more stringent, culminating perhaps in the strict Corrupt Practices Act attached to the law of 1895<sup>35</sup> and to the primary election law of 1913.<sup>36</sup>

A third tendency since 1843 is noticeable in the various attempts to define more precisely the qualifications of voters within the broad general requirement that they must be twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States. The first state constitution required two years' residence in the state and six months in the county,<sup>37</sup> but this was changed by amendment in 1847 to one year in the state and six months in the county, - provisions that have been retained since that time. No change was made during the Civil War except that the voters had to be citizens of the Confederate States. The constitution of 1865 established the same qualifications that were in existence before the War, permitting only free whites to vote.<sup>38</sup>

More specific limitations were included in 1868, at the same time that aliens who had taken out their first papers and negroes were enfranchised.<sup>39</sup> The following were now disqualified: those under guardianship, the insane, idiots, those convicted of felony, bribery, perjury, larceny or other infamous crimes, duelers, and bettors on election results, - disqualifications that have remained since that time. The constitution of 1868 also required that the legislature should disfranchise the illiterate after 1880, although nobody should be disqualified who had voted or registered at

<sup>33</sup>1843 Acts, p. 13 f. <sup>34</sup>1845 Acts, (adjourned session p. 87. <sup>35</sup>1895 Acts, p. 56 ff. <sup>36</sup>1913 General Acts, p. 242 ff. For other laws relating to this subject, see 1854 Acts, p. 47; 1868 Acts, p. 7 and p. 106; 1881 Acts, p. 83; 1909 Acts, p. 71 ff., et ad.

<sup>37</sup>Article 6, clause 1. <sup>38</sup>See Francis Newton Thorpe: *The Federal and State Constitutions*. Vol. II, p. 695. <sup>39</sup>See 1868 Acts, p. 3 ff. See also 1868 Constitution, Article XV. <sup>40</sup>1868

any previous election.<sup>40</sup> This is the only provision ever made in Florida for an educational test and it was never made effective. In 1868 the registration laws which had their rather vague beginnings in the first state constitution<sup>41</sup> and in the acts of 1845,<sup>42</sup> were made much stricter.<sup>43</sup> All qualified electors who desired to vote had to register at least six days before the election and take the following oath: "I do solemnly swear that I will support, protect, and defend the constitution and government of the United States and the constitution and government of the State of Florida, against all enemies, foreign or domestic ; that I will bear true faith, loyalty and allegiance to the same, any ordinances, or resolutions of any State Convention, or Legislature, to the contrary notwithstanding, so help me God."

The principles of these reconstruction election laws were retained after the era had come to an end. In 1877 an annual revision of the registration lists under the supervision of the county commissioners was ordered. The time limit for registration was set not later than ten days before the election.<sup>44</sup> The constitution of 1885 continued the requirement of registration for voting. The oath was now changed to the **following** : "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Florida, that I am twenty-one years of age, and have been a resident of the State of Florida twelve months and of this county for six months, and I am qualified to vote under the Constitution and laws of the State of Florida."<sup>45</sup>

In 1887 the provision was made that a person need not register a second time so long as he did not move

Constitution, Article XIV, section 7. <sup>41</sup>1839 Constitution, Article VI, section 2. <sup>42</sup>1845 Acts (1st session), p. 36. <sup>43</sup>1868 Acts, p. 4. 1868 Constitution, Article XV, section 1.

<sup>44</sup>1877 Acts, p. 64 ff. <sup>45</sup>1885 Constitution, Article VI.



to another county.<sup>46</sup> This was changed in 1915 so that biennial registration was required in cities having a population of more than 20,000<sup>47</sup> and in 1923 in counties with more than 80,000 inhabitants.<sup>48</sup> The present provision for closing the registration books on the second Saturday of the month preceding the general election was passed in 1895,<sup>49</sup> while that for closing the books on April 30 before the primaries was fixed in 1915.<sup>50</sup>

Another qualification for voting was added in 1889, when a poll tax of one dollar a year was added.<sup>51</sup> Exemptions from this payment of poll tax were made in 1895 in the ease of those who were more than fifty-five years of age or who had lost a limb in battle. All others if they had been eligible to vote for the preceding two years were required to pay the poll taxes of these years.<sup>52</sup>

A state constitutional amendment in 1894 disfranchised aliens with their first papers. It will be remembered that the constitution of 1868 had given them the right to vote. The last great change made in the suffrage qualifications occurred in 1920, when the nineteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States doubled the number of voters by giving the ballot to women.

The fourth and latest important development in Florida election laws is part and parcel of that tendency, apparent all over the country in the last thirty years, for state control over political parties. The

<sup>46</sup> 1887 Acts, p. 66. <sup>47</sup>1915 General Acts, p. 150. <sup>48</sup> 1923 General Acts, p. 327.

<sup>49</sup>1895 Acts, p. 61. <sup>50</sup>1915 General Acts, p. 151, <sup>51</sup>1889 Acts, p. 13. <sup>52</sup>1895 Acts, p. 56 ff. The fact that the fundamentals of the election laws of 1868 have remained unchanged would seem to indicate that W. W. Davis in *The Civil War and Reconstruction in Florida* (New York, 1913), p. 512, was right in assuming that the constitution of 1868 was a "joint product of the moderate Republicans . . . . . and certain native white conservatives".

Florida, legislature first took official cognizance of the existence of political parties in 1897,<sup>53</sup> when regulations were passed governing the conduct of primary elections, if the executive committee or a majority of the qualified electors of the party decided to use this method of making nominations. The danger of "snap" primaries was guarded against by the provision that twenty days' notice of the election must be given in some newspaper. "Packed" primaries were prohibited by the clause that no person was permitted to vote who was not an elector according to the laws of the state and had not paid his poll tax. Vote by ballot was required. The general election laws of the state were in force, and a plurality of votes was sufficient to nominate. Within the limits of these regulations the executive committee was still supreme. It had the power to decide on the qualifications necessary for membership in the party, to prepare the ballot, and to appoint the election inspectors.

In 1901, the twenty days' notice of a primary was increased to thirty days. A majority of all votes was now required to nominate; if no one received a majority, a second primary was held within four weeks, in which a plurality would nominate. The ballots were now to conform to the requirements of the general election law of the state.<sup>54</sup>

In 1909 the candidates in the primaries were required to file with public officers an account of their expenditures at least ten days before and not later than ten days after the primary. At the same time the form of the ballot was somewhat changed,<sup>55</sup> a strict corrupt practices act was passed and the election inspectors were to be paid.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>1897 Acts, p. 62 ff.

<sup>54</sup>1901 Acts, p. 161 ff. <sup>55</sup>See above. <sup>56</sup>1909 Acts, p. 71 ff.

In 1913 the present primary election<sup>57</sup> law came into existence, although it has been modified somewhat since that time. All political parties whose highest candidate at the last preceding general election polled five per cent<sup>58</sup> of the total number of votes cast, were required to nominate their candidates in primaries held on the same day, prescribed by law. The second primary was eliminated by permitting voters to indicate their first and second choice of candidates. The primary was made a hermetically sealed one by the provision that any voter on being challenged at the polls would have to take an oath that he did not vote for the nominee of any other political party at the last preceding general election.<sup>59</sup> A maximum limit to campaign expenditures for candidates for each office was also introduced. Other features of this law are the provision for the publication of a publicity pamphlet which is distributed by the state, and the requirement that all primary candidates must pay to a designated public official a filing fee of three per cent of the annual salary attached to the office.<sup>60</sup>

\* . . . \* . . . \*

In the development of election laws, Florida was probably never the leader *in a* new movement, but she seems to have been peculiarly responsive to new developments in other states. This can be seen in the democratic franchise in 1822, in the introduction of

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<sup>57</sup>1913 *General Acts*, p. 243 ff. <sup>58</sup>This was increased to thirty per cent in 1921 (See 1921 *General Acts*, p. 400 f.).

<sup>59</sup>This provision is seldom enforced. <sup>60</sup>The party may assess each candidate an additional two per cent. One more development in the state's election laws has occurred quite recently: the provision *for* absent voting. (See 1917 *General Acts*, p. 241 ff.)

the Australian ballot in 1895, and in the rapid development of the regulated primary system.

**JAMES OWEN KNAUSS.**

[Note. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to Judge J. B. Whitfield of the Supreme Court of Florida, who read the manuscript, and detected several errors. For any errors still remaining, the author alone is responsible.]

MASSACRE AT INDIAN KEY, AUGUST 7, 1840  
AND THE DEATH OF  
DOCTOR HENRY PERRINE

(Narrative of Hester Perrine Walker, a survivor) <sup>1</sup>

*[While at Campeachy, (1827-1838), where he served as United States consul, Dr. Henry Perrine, a native of New York City and a physician and botanist, determined to devote the remainder of his life to introducing and endeavoring to acclimatize useful tropical plants in semi-tropical Florida. He studied the matter and made collections of plants and seeds. The United States Congress, by an act approved July 7, 1898, made a conditional grant <sup>2</sup> to Dr. Perrine and his associates <sup>3</sup> of a township of land in South Florida, to be selected by him; the Senate Committee on Agriculture having reported <sup>4</sup> ". . . . that his services have been great; that his suggestions are important; and that his plans are laudably patriotic and practicable . . . . . and his voluminous manuscripts <sup>5</sup> alone exhibit a great amount of labor and research which promise to be highly beneficial to our common country." Dr. Perrine first established a nursery on Indian Key and the keys adjoining and resided there with his family from December, 1838, to the time of the massacre.]*

[1838]\_\_\_\_\_ My Father having resigned his position <sup>6</sup> & been for some months engaged in his surveys in South Florida, & his efforts to awaken an interest in the people of Florida to the culture of Tropical Fruits, & also in presenting his reports to Congress (These reports are found in the Reports of the 25th Congress 1838) & they, for his services granting him a Township of Land to be located in South Florida, we prepared to remove there. There were but few vessels running to Southern Ports, & for three long

<sup>1</sup>From an unpublished manuscript volume of reminiscences in the form of a journal written by Mrs. Hester Perrine Walker, a daughter of Dr. Perrine, in the year 1885, and now in the collection of The Florida Historical Society.

(All other notes will be found at the end of the narrative.)

months we waited in New York for a sailing vessel that would land us at "Indian Key." Believing the "Seminole War" closed, we had expected to go upon the land at once, & Joel R. Poinsett, the then "Secretary of War", had promised to make it a Military Post, so there need be no fear of Indians. While in New York my Father received a letter from the Sec. saying "The war had again broken out and it would not be prudent to go on the land." Then my Father decided to go to "Indian Key" & remain there until we could go to his land, as there was already established there one of his depots of plants sent from "Yucatan" & under the care of Mr. Charles Howe. We sailed from New York the first week in December 1838, & landed at Indian Key on Christmas morning!

As soon as our vessel came to anchor Mr. Howe came on board, and in his boat we were landed. Our first Christmas dinner was eaten at his hospitable table. How well I remember the curious "Conch Soup", and that Roast of Beef!! Some years before, Captain Houseman the owner of the Island had imported a cow & bull, hoping to raise stock. From some cause the cow died, & he had determined to kill the bull, and hearing that Father was coming, determined to await his arrival, so we could enjoy what was to be to them such a great luxury! forgetting that we were from a land of good beef. The task Mr. Howe had in cutting that roast and our teeth had in masticating it can better be imagined than told !! But the fresh vegetables and delicious fruits made amends.

I cannot forget our delight on first seeing this beautiful little island of only 12 acres. It was truly a "Gem of the Ocean." The trees were many of them covered with morning glories of all colors, while the Waving Palms, Tamarinds, Papaws, Guavas, Sea-side Grape tree, and many others too numerous to mention

made it seem to us like fairy land, coming as we did from the midst of snow and ice.

Our twenty months of life there was a very peculiar one. We were shut out from all social life, with the exception of the family of Mr. Howe. We might have had a great deal of society from the Officers of the Navy and Army who frequented the Island, but as my sister and I were only school girls, my Father would not have allowed, or rather, did not allow us to come into the parlor when they called, & in reply to the question "Are we not to see your daughters sir" my Father would reply, "They are only school girls, sir, and are engaged in their school room." He perhaps would not have been quite so strict, had he not heard, that before our arrival the Officers had been boasting that "they would make the Dr.'s daughters the Belles of the Reef", and while there were a few that my Father would have permitted us to know, there were others that no pure woman would care to associate with, & in our isolated state it was impossible to make invidious distinctions, without creating great enmity. Whenever there were officers upon the Island, we would close our blinds & peep behind them to see them, when they would walk in front of our house, trying to get a peep at us!! They would sometimes come in boats under our windows & serenade us, which would make my Father *furios*. I think as we grew older it became a kind of "hide & seek" game, & as we knew we were not permitted to know them, they should not see us.

We had an abundance of books and papers, but only a monthly mail. This mail we generally had brought in a bushel basket & had our arrangements so made that for at least a week after its receipt our household duties should not seriously interfere with our enjoyment of it. For amusement we sometimes used to fish, learned to use a rifle & pistols, & often

go over to "Lower Matacumba" with Father when he spent the day there attending to his plants. <sup>7</sup> We would take our lunch & send the men back with our boat, & at sundown they would return for us. When tired with work, Father would go with me upon the beach to gather shells & other curiosities.

One memorable day, only **three** days before the Indians came to Indian Key! Father and I went over, and he did but little work and then telling me that "he had found a place where it would be pleasant for us to take our lunch" took me about a mile down the Beach & then turning into the Forest soon brought me to a spot where he parted the branches & **there** was a "Fairy Grotto." In the center was a small sparkling spring perhaps ten or fifteen feet across ; various cacti in bloom & fruit, with other flowers upon the banks ; the overarching trees interlacing their boughs, while innumerable air plants in full bloom added brilliancy to the scene, the sun scarcely penetrating. I shall never forget my amazement & delight. In after days, I heard that when the Indians were captured, they told of their having **then** been on that Island, "lying in wait on the back side of the Island, waiting for the vessels of war to leave the Island so they might attack it, and that all **that** day they were following us from tree to tree, and watching our movements, but would not capture us because if we were missing when the boat came for us, there would search be made & **they** would be discovered & captured." A kind Providence again preserved my life.

Of our entire life on the Island I cannot write, but will tell some few amusing and interesting occurrences. One of these was the arrival of Gen'l Harney with a vessel loaded with soldiers on their way to the Caloosahatchie River where they were going to establish a Post & locate the Seminoles on their Reservation, as



another truce & treaty had been made with the treacherous creatures & the War was supposed to be at an end. Gen'l Harney's confidence in their intention to keep the peace **was unbounded**. "Why! Dr., if it was necessary to go alone, with my hands bound behind my back through their country to show my faith in them, I would do it." My Father's reply was, "Harney, they are treacherous rascals, don't trust them too much." That night Harney sent a boat load of his best singers under our window to serenade us, alas! but a few days after their voices were hushed in death!

I do not remember how many days had elapsed, when one evening in taking our usual walk, we thought we would go up into the observatory of Capt. Houseman's warehouse & take a look at the islands about us. While there we saw, far off toward the mainland, a small boat apparently hurrying in our direction. After watching it for some time, & fearing it might be an Indian spy, we hurried down to put the inhabitants upon their guard; after a few hours watching, Gen'l Harney and one man stepped ashore! They & five others having been the sole survivors of that terrible massacre of the Caloosahatchie! Terribly had my Father's fears been realized. <sup>8</sup>

Soon after our arrival at Indian Key, Judge Marvin, afterwards "Gov. of Florida", & Stephen Mallory, afterwards "Confederate Sec'y of the Navy", came up in a sailing vessel "to pay their respects to the Dr. & his family", but alas for human expectations, the Dr's daughters were not to **be seen!** "My daughters are only school girls sir", was again the reply that doomed the young men to disappointment! While from behind our blinds, my sister & I watched their departure, and mourning over our own failure to **be** the "Belles of the Reef".

At one time we saw a very rare sight. **Three** great water-spouts coming from the south east directly

towards Indian Key & moving with great velocity. A big gun was loaded to fire into and break them before they could reach us, when their course diverted and they broke near the lower end of Lower Maticumba. Had they broken upon Indian Key, we should all have been destroyed.

At another time as we were sitting upon our piazza we witnessed a terrific battle between a Shark and a young Sperm Whale ! Within the Reef and between the Islands at low tide the water is very shallow, but threading their tortuous courses are many deep rivers or channels, never very wide. But a few rods from our house was one of these channels. One evening just before dark our attention was attracted by two large dark forms moving rapidly through the water & as they arrived directly in front of our house the pursuer, which proved to have been a Shark 16 feet long! overtook his game, which proved to be a young Sperm Whale, & catching his tail in his great mouth, bit it off. **Instantly** the waters even up to our steps were deluged with blood, & the whale sent great volumes of water into the air. We had given the alarm & a boat was at once in pursuit and harpooned the whale and brought it ashore, while the shark was allowed to pass on in the narrow channel, as the men knew from his immense size he could not turn in it to escape & they could probably capture him in the morning, as **they** did, & from his liver they dried out **fifteen gallons of oil!**

The theory of the sailors was that the mother of this young whale had been killed in the Northern seas, & this young whale being unprotected, this Shark had been chasing it for some days & they had got inside of the Reef into one of these narrow channels just in time for us to witness a most remarkable sight. (The Sperm Whale is not found in the warmer waters of the Tropics.)

Another remarkable thing that we witnessed I must tell, a mirage, by which the Coast of the Main Land, although **twenty** miles away was brought into sight in mid air, but upside down! It was very beautiful!

With no associates but Mr. Howe's family, we still had many pleasures. We had no church, but every Sabbath evening we would go over to Mr. Howe's & spend the evening singing, to their delight & that of the Slaves who used to gather about the doors & windows. My mother was a very sweet singer & Sarah & I sang pretty well. Thus in a pleasant & primitive way we passed nearly two years. When my sister was taken very ill. For two weeks we had despaired of her life when on the memorable 6th of August, 1840, she began to rally & at night said, "let Father lie in the hammock in the hall & Mother you and Hester go to bed in your room, & put out the light & I believe I can sleep."

Thinking that it would be better for Sarah if we did as she requested, I retired with Mother. Father took his position in the hammock, & before we retired said to Mother, "Wife, there is a song which you used to sing to me when we were young & it has been ringing in my head all the evening, I wish you would sing it to me," & he repeated the first verse of it (Moore's *L e g a c y*).

When in death I shall calm recline  
O bear my heart to my mistress dear!

It would seem that a premonition of his speedy death was haunting him, for ere the next day's Sun had risen the murderous Seminoles had done their work. His life was ended.

**"History of the Massacre,"** with the, many little incidents that will interest my descendants, but were not published in the papers.<sup>9</sup>

The going down of the Moon is the only knowledge we have of the hour of the massacre & this was about two o'clock in the morning. A sailor who lived upon the Island, being very restless, thought he would take his gun & stroll around the Island, thinking he might run across some ducks. As he was on the east side he suddenly came upon the Indians (200 in number) creeping carefully along by Capt. Houseman's garden ; their evident intention being to surround the occupied houses before being discovered! Had they accomplished this, not a soul would have been spared to tell the tale. Realizing the situation at once, he raised his gun and fired among them, giving at the same time an alarming "War Whoop." The Indians separated at once & made a rush for the two largest houses on the Island, Capt. Houseman's and ours!

The front of our house rested upon the land, while the house itself was built over the Sea upon a stone wall, & around that was another wall leaving a moat around the house on three sides. <sup>10</sup> The piazza on the north side opened on to a long wharf. When Mr. Howe built the house he enclosed the narrow passage leading from the wharf to the cellar with stone & left open the end under the wharf: as also the end of the wharf & kept a boat in this stone passage way, so that in case the Indians should come, they might escape that way. As time passed & the near Island of "Tea Table Key" was made a Naval Station all thoughts of danger passed away. Then Mr. Howe had filled the end of the wharf & separated the wharf from this narrow passage, also by palmetto posts driven down, still allowing the tides to wash in & out of our cellar, which we utilized for Sea bathing. The pen under the wharf was used to confine turtle.

We were aroused from our sleep by the terrific war whoop simultaneously with the crack of Rifles & the falling of the glass from our broken windows. With

strange intuition we sprang from our beds to the head of the stairs & in the darkness with whispered inquiries "if all were there?" found Henry missing. I sprang back, & in passing the window looking into the yard I saw this terrific crowd of Indians dancing & whooping like demons by the flash of their Rifles, & ever will that fearful sight remain with me. My brother had a habit of screaming if suddenly awakened, & instinctively I clasped my hand over his mouth & whispered him to "keep still, the Indians, the Indians." Thinking of the risk I had run in passing before the window from the Rifle balls, we crept back to the head of the stairs where the rest of the family were. Henry's only exclamation was "Oh, my poor Grandmother, what will she do when she hears." My father then told us to go down into the bath room, & "he would see what he could do." Then Mother called back to him. "Husband, there is no ammunition." "I know it" he said, "go down into the cellar."

The Indians had evidently feared to break in at once, as they might have done, probably fearing resistance. By this time a portion of them had run around upon the breakwater wall, & there was no escape from any outside way. With a martyr's heroism he went, out on the piazza & called to them in Spanish, <sup>11</sup> "I am a Physician & will go with you to heal your people." Upon this they gave a great shout & left the house. Father came down then & closed the trap door, telling us to "go on into the narrow passage way, for if we remained in the cellar the Indians might see us through the openings." He then drew a heavy chest of seeds over the door, concealing every trace of its existence. He had scarcely accomplished this when the Indians returned & with their Tomahawks began battering down the door & breaking in the windows, having apparently given up their intention of sparing him. The reasons for his doing as he did were ; a short

time before when a flag of truce was flying the Indians had told the Officers that "they had lain in wait for a long time at Fort Dallas, on the Miami, trying to catch the Dr. away from the fort, as they had a good deal of sickness among them." The ignorant Indians having the same faith in a white Dr. as ignorant whites, have in an Indian Dr!

Knowing that the return of the Indians meant death! Father fled to the Cupola, we think, hoping that he might be able from there to see help coming from the Naval Depot, & that as the door was a heavy one, he might be able to hold out until relief came. (There were probably runaway negroes among them, for when they got inside we distinctly heard one say, "They are all hid, old man up stairs" & then they ran up.) For a few moments after they swarmed up the stairs after him, there was a horrid silence, only broken by the blows of their Tomahawks upon the door, then a crash, one wild shriek, a Rifle Shot, & all was still.

They then came down & commenced pillaging our house. All our trunks, boxes, & barrels of provisions, were dragged over our heads & dumped in confused masses into boats drawn up near to our hiding place. Their bare legs plainly visible to us & our choicest treasures being carried off. As they went into our pantry for a short space there was again silence as they consumed the good things there, for only the day before I had been shewing my skill in baking Bread, Rusks, Pies & Cookies, a goodly store.

After their repast was over they would take first one pile of dishes and then another & throw them upon the floor breaking them to pieces, & they would dance & whoop! So they broke everything in the house before they set fire to it. At first they commenced throwing our books out of the window into the water but soon thought they had a better use for them in piling them under the Cupola and setting

them on fire. Thus our house burned from the top downwards. There was no wind & it burned slowly. Until it had burned so low that the Indians were obliged to leave it, they were constantly swarming on the wall & dancing on the boards over our **heads giving** their terrific war whoops. Soon after daylight the smoke began to come slowly into our hiding place, the tide had risen until there was only room for our heads between the water & the boards, but when it was low there was perhaps a foot in depth. Remember that the hiding place was only four feet wide, four feet high, & ten feet long! then the bank sloped gradually until at the end of the wharf it was about ten or twelve feet. On the end of this wharf about six cords of wood were piled waiting for the wrecking vessels to take it off. Towards ten o'clock (as we thought) the smoke became so annoying that we were obliged to throw the water over our heads to be able to breathe. The Indians heard us & running down to the trap door at the end of the wharf, lifted it & looked down, their shadows upon the water being distinctly visible to us. Had they turned their heads in the slightest they would have seen us, but seeing the numbers of Turtle splashing around must have supposed the noise they heard was from them. Again was the remarkable Providence of God signally displayed toward us! Soon after the fire had progressed so that it became evident the house would soon fall into the cellar. Timber after timber fell, & the smoke & steam became unendurable. The piazza fell in & the flames communicated to the boards over our heads, but we kept them subdued for awhile by throwing water upon them. But when the wharf beyond us & the cords of wood upon it were all in flames, our lives were in immediate danger. My brother had been kept from screaming aloud by my Mother's firm pressure of her hands over his mouth, but he finally broke from her

with the exclamation, "I will go for I had rather be killed by the Indians than to be burned to death." He then struggled through between the narrow passage by the Palmetto posts & passing down to the trap door, made a spring & lifting himself into the opening jumped down into the water & made for the land. Our suspense was intense & we waited with bated breath for the Rifle Shot that would announce his death.

When no sound was heard & we realized that for some time we had not seen a boat pass we hoped that the Indians had gone. We could no longer stay in our hiding place, we could not pass through the narrow space that my brother did, & with her hands my Mother dug away the marl from the foot of one of the posts until she could drop it down & thus we passed through & under the burning wharf, the floor of it burned off at one side so that the burning wood pile was sliding down & the coals fell upon us. When we reached the trap door Mother helped me to reach to the top, then lifting my sick Sister I dragged her up & helped her down to the other side, then reached my hands down & thus helped Mother to get up, we then jumped down & taking my Sister by the arms, Mother on one side & I on the other we started for the land.

The awful silence prevailing there made us feel that (as Mother said) "we should only find the dead bodies of all our friends" & she said "**we cannot go** there, oh **where** shall we go.." At that moment we espied at the side of the wharf a Ship's Launch moored. It was about two or three hundred feet away. We also saw my brother standing in front of Houseman's store & his attention being attracted, we beckoned him to go down on the wharf and get into the boat, & we waded through the water which was then nearly up to our waists. When half way to the boat my Sister sank down exclaiming "I am dying, leave me and escape yourselves." Of course we could not



do that & supporting her under each arm we dragged her to the boat & Henry bending over bent it down so that we could lift Sarah in, & she dropped almost lifeless in the bottom of the boat where she lay until our rescue by the boat that came to our relief.

About three miles from there lay a Schooner at anchor that had come loaded with canoes for the proposed expedition into the Everglades. We of course steered for this vessel. Mother had an Indian paddle, my Brother a pole & I an oar. With these we were making our way rapidly to the schooner, when looking to her & seeing no boat putting out to our help we thought that it must be the Indians had been **there** and massacred all; (We found however that we came so rapidly that they thought it was the crew of a vessel that was being repaired in the Harbor.) Then Mother said "Well we will steer for the Gulf Stream & we shall surely be picked up **there** before we starve," when suddenly it seemed that a miracle had been performed for in the bow of the boat we discovered a barrel of flour, a keg of Molasses, a jug of Brandy, a box of Soap, a box of Tobacco & a Mosquito Bar, just torn from some bed! Our eyes had been strangely held that we had not seen these things until that moment. Had we seen them at first we should not have dared to take the boat knowing there were Indians still there, From Mr. Goodyear, who was hidden in a fig tree, we learned that there were six Indians who had just gone into the store for more plunder & probably stopping to drink, we had just had the time to make our escape. Our boat had only gone around the end of the wharf when they came down with more plunder & supposing their boat had got adrift they ran down to the end of the wharf & discovered us. Their rifles had been left in the store & before they could get them & fire upon us we were beyond Rifle Shot! All of the other boats with the Indians were at the end of the Upper

Matacumba awaiting the coming of this one. When they saw that our boat had turned toward the Gulf Stream they put out in a canoe to chase us, but before getting near they saw the Schooner's boat coming, to our relief & so they landed at Indian Key & **then** set fire to the houses & taking their companions made all speed back, for already small spots on the horizon warned them that the wreckers from Key Gavanier & the three naval schooners were on their way to our relief.

When we escaped from our burning house the whole burning mass excepting one corner beam had fallen into the cellar where there was water to quench the fire, but the smoke & steam were so dense that although clasped in each others arms we could not distinguish faces! The Indians had probably set our house on fire first from the fact of their finding three beds that had been occupied; & only finding Father they thought to drive us out from our hiding place by fire. The other houses they had left to plunder & did not burn until by the sight of the vessels coming to our relief they were warned to flee.

When we first saw the boat from the Schooner coming we feared it was an Indian boat & redoubled our efforts to get out to Sea until it was near enough for us to see that she was rowed and not paddled. Then we knew they were friends & not Indians.

It was then two o'clock in the afternoon! **Twelve** long hours we had been in the midst of these terrible sufferings, but not till then did our courage leave us, or had we shed a tear. But when we **knew** we were safe our oars dropped from our hands & sitting on the bottom of the boat, the blessed tears came to our relief. We drifted with the tide until the Captain's boat overtook us, & as they drew near for the first time we began to realize our nearly naked condition. Sarah had on her night gown, while Mother and I having

taken ours off on account of the warm night, had on but the one garment. Henry was entirely naked, having taken his shirt off & tied it to a pole as a signal of distress to any passing vessel. Quickly Mother took the blessed mosquito bar & tearing it in two wrapped its folds about us just as the Captain & his two negro sailors caught hold of our boat & soon anchoring her, took us in their arms & carefully & tenderly put us in their boat, the negroes begging us not to cry, saying, "Oh, don't cry, Missus ; don't cry ; you are safe now Missus; you are safe now."

We soon reached the Schooner's side & there found to our great delight that nearly all of the inhabitants had escaped. There had been 70 souls on the Island & of these there were but 13 missing. The Indians, by attacking the two largest houses first had given the others a chance to get to their boats & of course all had steered for the Schooner. When safely on the Schooner's deck we were carried to the cabin door & told "to take anything we could find to cover ourselves with." Some had caught clothing as they ran, others were as destitute as ourselves & had used up all of the sailors' clothing. All that we could do was to strip the sheets from the berths & rolling a sheet around our bodies & tying it on with a piece of tarred rope, folded another like a shawl to put over our shoulders & a square of the Mosquito netting tied over our heads completed our attire for the first 24 hours.

After getting on board my Sister gave up entirely & was very sick. Dr. McCreery & Midshipman Murray who were in charge of the Station at "Tea Table Key" brought a cot & a hospital tent on board & placed it in the Stern of the vessel & there we laid Sarah, who was now delirious. About midnight there was a terrific thunder storm & we imagining that we heard guns & Indian shouts wildly insisted upon the Captain's lowering his boat & letting us get into it that

we might go out to Sea. With our own hands we tried to loosen the boat but were finally persuaded & calmed down. The blessed daylight showed us the three Naval vessels & many of the wreckers vessels at anchor near us, they had arrived in the night. The guns we had heard were from the Sentinel on guard at the Post, who saw a floating log on the water & thinking in the darkness that it was an Indian canoe had given the alarm.

Commander McLaughlin at once came on board & tendered "his cabin for our use, & his vessel to carry us wherever we wished to be carried." In the meantime, as the Indians were far away, the inhabitants returned to the Island, as two or three houses had been saved from the flames & some soldiers were put there on guard.

A circular letter had been given to Father when he went to Indian Key by the Secretary of War Joel R. Poinsett, directing the Officers of the Army and Navy "to afford to Dr. Perrine & his family any assistance in their power, at any time, that was consistent with their duty to their Country." Therefore Commodore McLaughlin felt this to be his duty. He offered to take us directly to New York, but Mother desirous that the expedition into the Everglades should not be delayed by us & knowing that a Gov't Steamer was at Miami, told him that she would only ask him to take us there, & let us take that Steamer to St. Augustine. In the mean time a woman who lived with her husband on Key Largo (I think) on Capt. Houseman's plantation there, seeing from their Island the flames of Indian Key, **knew** that the Indians had been there & only seizing a basket of clothes that she had just folded down from her week's washing made all speed with their boat to the Schooner and soon distributed her most welcome burthen. Mr. Howe went back to Indian Key & in his garden found some dresses that had been

scattered, & Mother & I each secured a dress, & a pair of high heeled shoes with large buckles upon them & which the Indians had thrown away from their plunder, fell to my share. The Officers sent us some socks and we used tarred rope for elastics! My dress was one of Mrs. Howe's & as she was so much taller than I & larger around the waist it was lapped nearly under my arms & pinned over (The Officers had by this time sent us pins, combs, brushes & tooth brushes) so that we could make ourselves presentable, & as I walked I held up my dress to keep from stepping on it. Our heads had been so plastered with Marl from the bottom of the Sea to keep our hair from burning that they "looked like a plastered wall." The Sailors drew many buckets of water to cleanse our heads as we hung over the side of the vessel & then to get out the tangles we utilized a bottle of Sweet Oil from the Captain's Stores. All this time my Sister had to keep her berth. On Thursday we had escaped & on Saturday Mother gave her assent to going on board the Commodore's vessel. Just at sunset he came up with his "Gig." Sarah was lowered into it lying upon her cot & covered entirely with a sheet. We all followed & were swiftly borne to "The Flirt." As we passed the two other vessels of War their shrouds were manned by the Sailors, while the Officers stood upon the bowsprit all with their caps in hand & a solemn silence as of the grave. When we reached the Flag Ship steps had been rigged for our accommodation. Henry passed up first, then I & as I stepped upon the vessel in the attire that I have already described! a piece of mosquito bar tied over my head, & a small shawl of the same about my shoulders! you can imagine my consternation at beholding one hundred & fifty marines drawn up in a half circle, with *thirteen* Officers in full uniform in front of them, caps in hand, drawn up to receive us & the silence so intense you might have

heard a pin drop. The thought of our *nearly two* years of "bo-peep" came upon me in full force, & I could scarce refrain from laughing outright. Remember I was *just sixteen!* I have often thought since that these officers must have been inwardly chuckling at our being thrown into their hands.

As soon as I reached the deck, Lieut. now Admiral C. P. R. Rodgers stepped forward and offered me his arm to "go to the Cabin" I thanked him & told him that "I preferred to wait until my Sister and Mother came up" & so I stood "a spectacle". Then the cot with Sarah was brought up followed by Mother with Commodore McLaughlin. The Commodore ordered the sailors to take up the cot, then gave Mother his arm. Lieut. Rodgers gave me his & we went to the Stern followed by all the Officers, who took their places & waited, hoping to see Sarah but Mother very politely asked the Commodore "to ask them to please walk forward while she got her daughter down into the Cabin."

After our three days previous experience this little Cabin (the Commodore's private Cabin) seemed like a little Palace, its appointments were all so perfect, & soon a delightful supper was served to us with the Captains own servant to wait upon us.

The day before we went on board Lieut. Rodgers took my brother & me over to Indian Key, as I hoped I might be able to secure some memento that the Indians might have dropped, but I found nothing but a few water soaked books, which are now treasured mementoes. As I came towards our house several gentlemen and Officers that were upon the Island followed & joined me, & as I walked around upon the Breakwater wall to the place where we had been concealed they came also. As we reached it I said "There is the place." Instantly every head was bared & in silence they stood, not a word was spoken. I then

turned & walked back onto the land when Lieut Rodgers stepped in front of me & with bared head said "Miss Perrine I beg your pardon." "For what sir" I answered. "For having felt that it was impossible for your story to be literally true. I thought your terror had made you exaggerate its dangers, but it is impossible for you to have told the half."

Mr. Howe had had the marl raked & there found all that was left of Father's remains, a thigh bone, a few ribs & a portion of the skull. These he had wrapped in a paper & laid them in my hands. I desired him to have them suitably enclosed in a box & buried under the broad spreading leaves of our Father's awn **Agave** Sisalana at our garden on Lower Maticumba, as being the most suitable place for their resting place.

Sabbath morning the wind being favorable we set sail for Cape Florida & I believe arrived there that night. We anchored in Biscayne Bay and were there a week. The soldiers' wives at Fort Dallas gave us each a dress. Lieut T. W. Sherman came to see us and used daily to send us fruits and watermelons for our comfort. When the U. S. Steamer was ready to sail he detailed Dr. Worrall, a Surgeon in the Army, to accompany us North.

After leaving Biscayne Dr. Worrall handed Mother a letter from the Officers of the Navy & another from those of the Army stationed at "Fort Dallas" each of which contained a sum of money to aid us in our extremity. Our first landing was at Mosquito Inlet. There was a military station & had been the scene of Indian outrages. As we entered the harbor of St. Augustine the captain was surprised at seeing a carriage upon the wharf. The small hotel then there, the "Florida House", was so near the wharf that it was not usual to send a carriage. As soon as the Steamer made fast the proprietor of the "Florida House" came

on board & asked if Dr. Perrine's family were on board, announced that "he was deputed by the citizens to say that there had been rooms prepared at his hotel for our reception, & begging our accepting them at their expense." With great hospitality the citizens had met & appointed a delegation consisting of Dr. Peck, Sen., Dr. Anderson, Sen. & Judge Gould "to meet us and tender to us the hospitalities of the city." We had scarcely arrived before the parlor was filled with ladies & gentlemen to offer their sympathy and help. When evening came servants with baskets of clothing began to arrive. After we had accepted sufficient for our *immediate* necessities *we tried* to decline any more, but they *would* not allow us to do so. Gov. Reid had left word to "be sent for as soon as we arrived" & in the morning he with his beautiful young wife came in such state as became their position, carriage, footmen, etc., to tender to us the hospitality of their beautiful home. We could not accept for a vessel was to sail for the North. There was neither Telegraph nor Steam from Florida in 1840 & we hoped to reach our friends before they had heard. In taking leave of us Gov. Reid with tears in his eyes said to Mother "Mrs. Perrine, always command me as you would a brother, for no one knows as well as I what Dr. Perrine & his enterprise would have been to Florida." Not only clothing but a liberal purse was donated to us by this generous people! Three days we remained there & then took schooner for Savannah & Steamer for Charleston. There some of the citizens came down to the wharf to meet us & we were strongly urged to stay there for awhile & "they, would have a collection made for us in the churches" but we declined with thanks. At Wilmington we found the first Railroad & from there went on to Portsmouth, Va. & took Steamer for Baltimore. Dr. Worrall having to report in Washington we remained there two days to await his return.



At Philadelphia Gen'l John A. Perrine met us & we were with our own friends once more! During all our journey Dr. Worrall had been like a brother. No where on our journey would any one receive a penny for **any** service rendered, & twice when we had paid our fare from some point, when they found **who we** were, it was returned with many apologies!

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Notes

<sup>2</sup> *An Act to encourage the introduction and promote the cultivation of Tropical plants in the United States.* Whereas Dr. Henry Perrine has distinguished himself by his persevering exertions to introduce tropical plants into the United States . . . . . Be it enacted . . . . . that a township of land is hereby granted to Dr. Henry Perrine and his associates in the southern extremity of the peninsular of Florida . . . . . to be located upon any portion of the public lands below twenty-six degrees north latitude . . . . . that whenever any section of land in said tract shall be really occupied by a boni fide settler, actually engaged in the cultivation of valuable tropical plants, a patent shall issue to the said Henry Perrine and his associates.

<sup>3</sup>These associates were (1838) James Webb, District Judge, Key West; and Charles Howe, Inspector of the Port (and Postmaster) at Indian Key. The two names are given in an announcement *To the Friends of the Enterprise* appearing in a pamphlet (New York, 1838), apparently published by Dr. Perrine; which contains also *An Act to Incorporate the Tropical Plant Company of Florida*, passed by the Legislative Council of Florida, approved Feb. 8, 1838; an appeal *To Intelligent Philanthropists*; and *Report of Mr. Linn* (Senate Committee on Agriculture). (There is a copy in the library of P. K. & J. C. Yonge, Pensacola.)

<sup>4</sup>Published as Senate Document 300, 25th Cong., 2nd sess. (142 + 24 p.) This publication also contains copies of letters to the committee and to the Secretary of State from Dr. Perrine in explanation of his purpose and plans; meteorological tables in detail, Indian Key, 1837-38, 13 p.; temperature tables, Key West, 1838; botanical notes and index of plants; and twenty-four plates illustrating fibrous-leaved plants with which Dr. Perrine was mainly concerned.

As early as 1832 the State government became interested in Dr. Perrine's project. See *Message of James D. Wescott, Jr., Acting-Governor of Florida to the Legislative Council Jan. 3, 1832*, in Council journal 1832 pp. 5-6. See also *Report of committee to whom was referred petition of Henry Perrine*, in House journal (Florida) 1840, pp. 142-143.

<sup>5</sup>These, with all records of his subsequent investigations, were burned with Dr. Perrine's residence at the time of the massacre.

\*U. S. Consul at Campeachy.

<sup>7</sup>In 1907 Professor P. H. Rolfs, a foremost horticulturist of Florida and at that time director of the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station, wrote the Editor as follows: "Dr. Perrine was a very enthusiastic and in some ways a very eccentric man. Some of the plants which he introduced into the region of Biscayne Bay are persisting to the present time. I remember having studied a species of the vanilla plant which was unquestionably introduced by him, since it never produced seed in a native state; but when I put it into cultivation and hand-pollinated the flowers an abundance of pods were produced. These pods when properly fermented and treated produced a considerable amount of vanilline."

<sup>8</sup>On July 22, 1839, Lieutenant-Colonel Harney and his command of twenty-five dragoons were surprised at dawn in their camp on the Caloosahatchee River. Of the entire party of thirty, twenty-four were killed; Colonel Harney escaping by swimming. (See Sprague, *The Origin, Progress and Conclusion of the Florida War*, New York, 1848, p. 233.)

<sup>9</sup>Accounts of the massacre were published in the press throughout the country. In the *National Intelligencer* (Washington, D. C.) Dec. 19, 1840 there appears a *Narrative* signed by Mrs. Walker, as Hester M. S. Perrine and dated Aug. 20. This agrees with Mrs. Walker's journal in all but minor details—except that the Indians after Dr. Perrine spoke to them are said to have then pillaged the other houses and did not return to attack the Perrine house until about daylight. This would seem more probable, and agrees with the account of "an officer of the army" in Sprague, pp. 244-246. See also: Henry E. Perrine, *A True Story of Some Eventful Years in Grandpa's Life*. Buffalo (1885). Another account appears in *The News*, St. Augustine, August 21, 1840, differing only in unimportant details, and giving the names of the seven on the island who lost their lives. In the same issue of *The News* there is an editorial note of appreciation of Dr. Perrine's work in Florida. *The Courier*, Charleston, S. C., which got its story from Key West, is somewhat inaccurate.

<sup>10</sup>There is a sketch-plan of the house and wharf in the journal.

<sup>11</sup>The attack was made by the so-called Spanish Indians. Sprague, (*op. cit.* p. 99) says: "South of Pease Creek and Lake Okeechobee, near the extreme southern point of the peninsular, was a band of Spanish Indians, under an intelligent chief, called Chekika, speaking a language peculiarly their own, a mixture of Indian and Spanish. They numbered about one hundred warriors. They took no part in the war until 1839 and '40, when, finding themselves attacked and pursued, they took arms and resisted." It is likely they had been joined by stray Seminoles and negroes driven southward. This was supposed to be the same band which had massacred Col. Harney's command.

<sup>12</sup>The sisal hemp. Dr. Perrine seems to have considered his experiments with this plant the most important part of his work. In the *Report* (note 4, ante) the plant and its parts

are the subjects of several of the plates. Chapman, in his *Flora of the Southern United States* lists *Agave rigida*, var. *Sisalana*, as a native of the "Sandy coast of South Florida"; while Bailey, *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture*, considers it "naturalized on the keys". It was probably introduced by Dr. Perrine, for he did not find it growing there.

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It would seem today that, due to various conditions, Dr. Perrine's project could have proved only a failure. If the cultivation of sisal by mechanical means is ever to be profitable in Florida, its growing then in competition with the cheap labor of Yucatan was impracticable ; and doubtless his other expectations must have failed of realization. He was a pioneer, and, hence the chances of any great success were overwhelmingly against him. Distance and transportation were only a part of the difficulties in his way. His letters (annexed to the Report, ante) indicate the enthusiasm of a visionary more than of a practical man. He is convinced "that the propagation of fibrous-leaved plants on the most sterile districts of all our southern States will be still more important than the cultivation of all their present staples combined on their most fertile soils."

His experiments were only begun at the time of the massacre and the results were nil ; but the circumstances of his work and of his death have given Dr. Perrine a noteworthy place in the history of territorial Florida, higher perhaps than what he might have accomplished had he survived. His project attracted an interest in Washington as well as in Florida ; but what favorable attention the Territory received was negated by his seeming agreement with the then more or less prevalent idea of South Florida's topography and soils. He refers (in the letters mentioned) "to the general opinion of both the Government and of the people of the United States that southern Florida is so sickly and sterile a Ter-

ritory, in consequence of the miry marshes and inundated swamps of the interior, and of the arid sands, untillable rocks, and mangrove thickets of the coasts, as to be unworthy of even the trouble and expense of surveying and sale. He refers to "the undoubtedly great plagues of mosquitoes and sand flies, ticks and scorpions, ants and land crabs, serpents and alligators, and other noxious insects and reptiles." He believed "that the highest estimate of the unsurveyed public lands could not exceed one cent an acre"; but he was certain "that the benignity of the climate and the fertility of the atmosphere will counterbalance the defects of the soil."

It is interesting to note that (*Letters, ante*) "among the other plants especially recommended those which yield india rubber or caoutchoc [sic] (*Siphonia elastica, Castillea elastica*; etc.) are daily becoming more and more important to mankind." However, neither of these plants appear in the list of specimens which he sent to Florida for experimentation. Also - "Various species [of Cacti] would afford impenetrable hedges for fields; formidable outworks around forts; and even boundary walls between nations [!]"

He believed [1834] "that the swampy interior of Southern Florida is more elevated than its sandy shore. Hence, cheap canals may easily be cut from the longitudinal center to the parallel coast to drain the inundated swamps of the interior whose consequent value for the production of sugar alone would amply reward the capital expended. These same canals would constitute lateral channels of communication and transportation . . . . . and at the same time convey water to irrigate arid sands on the route. In tropical climates moisture is the substitute for manure . . . . ."

"Looking forward to the period when tropical Florida shall be thoroughly improved and highly cul-

tivated - when it shall combine all the material and mental enjoyments of which it is susceptible . . . . we may safely predict that, in population, wealth, and happiness, it will- greatly exceed every other equal portion of the world. The subscriber does not desire any greater honor than the power of passing the brief term of his existence amid the privations and exposures incident to a chief pioneer in the planting and population of tropical Florida." **[Letters, ante]**

## BACHELLER ESSAY CONTEST IN FLORIDA HISTORY

Florida's high school students are developing a lively interest in the Irving Bacheller Essay Contest, one of whose objects is to stimulate original research in the history of this state. Realizing the importance of such a movement, the Florida Historical Society has approved this plan and has helped to make it a success.

Eight years ago Irving Bacheller, the distinguished author, purchased a home at Winter Park, near Orlando. He at once became interested in Florida's educational work and shortly after becoming a Florida citizen was elected a trustee of Rollins College.

After a survey of the educational needs of Florida Mr. Bacheller established, under the auspices of Rollins College, an annual contest for the accredited high schools of the state, designed to encourage Florida boys and girls to use better English and to stimulate research and original thought on the problems of the state's welfare. As a reward for such effort he provided two handsome gold medals, to be given annually.

Mr. Bacheller and the committee in charge decided that the objects of the contest could best be brought about by choosing subjects in Florida history. Through the courtesy of President Williams of the Florida Historical Society, two prizes in gold were offered by the Society to supplement the Bacheller medals and to further stimulate this movement.

In order to provide reference materials for the contestants Dr. J. F. Taintor, Librarian of Rollins College, set about to compile a full bibliography on the subjects chosen. In this undertaking he received excellent co-operation from practically all the libraries

of the state. Announcements of the contest with copies of the bibliography were sent to all teachers of English and history in the state who have responded in a most gratifying manner. Some of these teachers have given writers of essays credit in the English and history courses for the work done.

Among subjects that have been used thus far are: "Florida, as First Seen by the Spaniards", "The Old Spanish Trail, 1620-1920", "Florida under English Rule, 1763-1783", "Florida in the 50's", "History of the Seminoles", "Historical Landmarks of Florida", "The Settlement of St. Augustine and its Early History".

Miss Anna Clark of the Sanford High School, won first place in this year's contest on the subject "Jackson's Administration of Florida". She was awarded the Bacheller medal for girls and because of the special excellence of her work President Hamilton Holt of Rollins presented her with an autographed portrait of General Jackson from his private collection.

The prize winners were -

First prizes (Bacheller gold medals)

Anna Clark                      Sanford

Hugh Seivert                    Orlando

Second prizes (Florida Historical Society gold pieces)

Geneva Miller                 Kissimmee

Clyde Russell                 Sanford

Miss Clark's essay follows:

A. J. HANNA.

### JACKSON'S ADMINISTRATION OF FLORIDA

The beginning of the Creek War brought upon the field a Nashville lawyer, then forty-six years of age, with the education of a frontiersman, but dignified in manner, imperious in nature and successful in his profession.

At the period when he became associated with Florida, he had behind him a record of several duels, high political honors in Tennessee, service in the U. S. Senate, and membership in the Supreme Court of the State. He had led a large command of troops towards New Orleans, and his men being suddenly dismissed, had paid their way home. On his return to Nashville, the War with the Creeks broke out.

Jackson led 2,000 men into the Indian Country, carried on a very energetic campaign, and, after numerous battles, delivered the finishing blow at Horsehoe Bend. In August, he made a treaty of peace with the Creeks in which they were compelled to cede a large area to the United States. Then came British troops to Florida, and Jackson after driving them out went to New Orleans.

In 1818 Pensacola was again captured by Jackson. This greatly astounded the government, as negotiations for Florida had then been under way and it was generally feared that Jackson's impulsive step would not only stop these, but cause enemies in Europe; But, by Adams's bold diplomacy and Jackson's mailed fist, Florida was acquired from Spain.

President Monroe appointed Jackson as commissioner to receive the formal surrender of the Floridas, as Governor of the whole territory taken possession of, and as Commissioner, vested with special and extraordinary powers, according to the treaty and acts of Congress.

Early in July traveling from the "Hermitage" with his staff, wife and adopted son, Gen. Jackson reached the "Fifteen Miles House", where he was entertained by the proprietor, Don Manuel Gonzalez. There, he made his headquarters, with the troops that followed him, until the arrangements had been made at Pensacola for the change of government.



On the morning of July 17, 1821, the day selected for this momentous occasion, a company of dismounted Dragoons from the Spanish army formed south of the flag staff in front of the government house, and a U. S. infantry batallion and company took place opposite. Between the lines Gen. Jackson and his staff passed to the government house where he joined with the Spanish Governor in executing the formal signatures for the delivery of West Florida, including the fortress at St. Marks, - after which, the two high officials passed between the saluting lines. As they reached the flag staff, the banner of Spain was lowered and the colors of the United States arose, greeted by the inspiring notes of the Star Spangled Banner and salutes from the artillery and guns.

The day of the exchange was one of sorrow to the Spanish inhabitants who elected to depart. "Oh, how they burst into tears", wrote Mrs. Jackson from Pensacola, "to see the last ray of hope depart from their devoted city and country."

The Spanish officers and garrison sailed away, but Governor Callava and his staff remained for some time. While preparing for his departure, an incident, which for a time cooled the friendly feeling between the Americans and Spaniards, occurred. It was reported that Callava was not carrying out his agreements. Jackson ordered his arrest and sent him to the calaboose. When Judge Fromentin issued a writ of Habeas Corpus for Callava, Jackson called him to account. But Callava was released and peace was restored.

In determining his scope of authority in Florida, Jackson was informed that it was impossible to find what manner of government the provinces were accustomed to under Spanish authority and that military rule was supreme. Judge Brackenridge said, "When Jackson came to consider his powers, he can-

didly declared that they were greater then should be committed to any individual and he willingly consented to delegate part of them to the inhabitants, both old and new." So, assuming the imposing title of "Governor of the provinces of the Floridas, exercising the powers of the Captain-General and of the Intendant of the island of Cuba, he issued his first Ordinance which was essentially American, and, as might be expected, not generally satisfactory to the inhabitants. This Ordinance, the first law under the rule of the United States, divided the territory into two counties-Escambia, west of the Suwanee River, and St. Johns, east. County Courts were provided for, grand and petit juries were authorized, and speedy and public trials required.

Other Ordinances restricted liquor-selling and gaming-houses by license, prohibited the selling of intoxicants to soldiers, established a Board of Health and Quarantine at Pensacola, and, at the suggestion of Mrs. Jackson, required the observance of the "Christian Sabbath."

The last Ordinance dated Sept. 6, 1821 was in regard to the regulation of the practice of medicine. As has been intimated, there was dissatisfaction with the Ordinance, especially the Sabbath regulation and the taxing power, and their repeal was obtained by Hernandez.

During Jackson's administration, Henry M. Brackenridge was appointed Commissioner, to act upon the claims for damages arising from the military operations of the United States. Commissioners were also appointed to settle the claims for lands under the Spanish and British grants. As these land claims covered large tracts of the Territory, their adjustment occupied several years, and, meanwhile, the public lands was kept from market to a large extent. As late as 1825, general discontent on this 'subject was voiced

when Simmons, Clark, and Mitchell declared that for "nearly four years, the incubus of a land commission had continued to paralyze and oppress the energies of the territory."

During this time, a military force was stationed at Pensacola and St. Marks, under Col. Fenwick, and at Amelia Island, under Lieut.-Col. Abram Eustis. This gave new life and activity to the towns, accentuated by the presence of a crowd of adventurers and prospectors from all parts of the Union, particularly at Pensacola, which soon had 4,000 inhabitants. But this period of prosperity was of short duration. In the following year, an epidemic of yellow fever swept Pensacola and killed many.

The Seminoles at this time, numbered 5,000. Jackson advocated the removal of all the Indians in Florida up into the Creek Nation, assuming that they had no rights in the land. "Why should we hesitate to order them up at once?" he wrote to Washington. "And where", he asked, "unless the Indians can be consolidated at one point, is the country that can be brought into market, from which the \$5,000,000 are to be raised to meet the claims of our citizens under the late treaty with Spain?" But in East Florida, the chief of the Seminoles sent an eloquent memorial to Washington, in regard to the neglect of any guarantee of their rights in the treaty with Spain.

Governor Jackson did not continue long at Pensacola. His home and higher ambitions appealed to him more strongly, than the administration of this young Territory, and, in the confidence of his family, he declared that he had enough of "A wild goose chase". He resigned Nov. 13, 1821, and returned to Tennessee, leaving the conduct of affairs with the Secretaries of Eastern and Western Florida.

Later, he served successful terms in the presidency and is the only president, who can be said to have gone

out of office far more popular than he was when he entered. He died on June 8, 1845.

He had lived, as it were, two lives. He had first assisted to subdue the Western Wilderness and then had taken the lead in defending it. He had first broken the power of the Seminole Indians and then, by a series of treaties, regulated the terms upon which they were to live in neighborhood with the conquering race.

Colonel White, a writer of this time, who had in contemplation a history of the State, remarked, "I wish to finish my History of Florida by the addition of some chapters on the Indian War, by, which it will be shown that General Jackson is the hero of three wars."

On the second day of the first session of the General Assembly of the State it was announced that Andrew Jackson was dead, and badges of mourning were donned to be worn for sixty days. For Jackson, the Colossus of his time, "whose intrepidity, whose energy, whose fiery temper and intense love of right made the most remarkable man The Republic has ever produced" was closely associated with Florida throughout his years of greatest fame. The strands of her destiny and his had been closely woven together and no one was more revered and beloved in The Young State than the great soldier who had hastened her separation from Spain.

**ANNA CLARK.**

A LETTER OF G. I. F. CLARKE'S RELATING TO  
PORT ST. JOSEPH, EAST FLORIDA

<sup>1</sup> Charleston, S. C., May 1st, 1823.

Sir, I have been informed by the Delegate of Florida, who I accidentally met here a few days since, on his return from Washington, that an unfavorable impression of my character, or views in Florida, is felt by the Executive of the United States or by some of the officers of that very respectable department, in consequence of two of my letters having been laid before them by Col. James G. Forbes of New York, which letters relate to the creation of Port St. Joseph in, East Florida, under the Spanish government; they were produced by the United States attorney on the trial of the french ship Apollon, in the circuit court at Savannah, and have lately been noticed by the Hon. Judge Johnston in his decree on the appeal in behalf of that ship.

As I cannot, for a moment, suppose the Executive of the United States is acquainted with all the facts connected with those letters ; nor that, under such circumstances, I ought to be silent on their explanations, I beg, Sir, your attention to the following statement:

I had the honor of commanding under the Spanish government those ports of East Florida laying west and north of St. Johns River, excepting only Amelia Island, that of Surveyor General, and one of my places of residence was the town of Fernandina when the place fell into the hands of General McGregor. I was

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<sup>2</sup>From the original in Bureau of Index and Archives, Department of State, Washington, D . . . C. Other letters of Clarke's, also relating to the disturbances in East Florida, 1811-1818, were published in the QUARTERLY in July and in October, 1925; and still others, of which the originals are in the collection of the Society, will appear in future issues.

absent at the time, and did not return-it had become necessary for me to keep between him and his successors in their farther progression into the province, and to endeavor by every means, to check to and from that place, the passage of negro and other cargo piratically acquired and that of dissolute characters thrown together in such scenes of iniquity. And the better to effect those and other objects beneficial to both governments, I took a house of occasional residence in the town of St. Marys, Ga., obtained a power as consular agent there from H. C. Majesty's consulate for the Carolinas and Georgia and established a regular mail from thence through East Florida.

Fernandina having been taken possession of by your troops, the passage of all the waters of Florida, discharging by St. Marys Bar, became shut against foreign vessels by instructions to the collector of St. Marys from his government founded on the absence of a Spanish port of entry in their neighborhood. The French ship "Apollon" from Havre de Grace, came into those waters in quest of a port. Her captain proceeded to St. Augustine and the deputy collector of that city brought me orders from my then government to select and lay out (as engineer pro tempore) a proper place for a port of entry, etc., and orders to govern it. I placed it about seven miles from Georgia, and called it Port St. Joseph.

The Apollon was taken to it, entered, and moored, and immediately after I officially communicated to the collector of St. Marys the presence of that port of entry.

Some time previous to this Col. Forbes had been with me, on a visit to St. Augustine - the place of our nativity ; we had been schoolmates there. Our parents had been friends and we had perpetuated that friendship; we corresponded by letters on many subjects. I gave him several intimates of our contem-

plated port of entry, selected him alone from among all my friends and acquaintances and invited him there as one to serve. Much commercial business would lay at my commendation and I would disinterestedly put all into his hands. I knew his pecuniary circumstances were limited, his age advanced, his family large and young.

The collector of St. Marys having had the Apollon carried by an armed force from her moorings at Port St. Joseph to the town of St. Marys, Col. J. Forbes selected those two letters and layed them before the Executive of the United States.

I acted, Sir, as an officer of Florida; my object was my country's good. The political principle of benefitting by the misfortunes of others has ever been universal. The same gave birth and being to Fernandina and wealth to Florida during the embargo of the United States, their non-intercourse and the war with Great Britain-from 1807 to 1815 -wherein one sweep of the eye from that port could gather in one hundred and fifty square rigged vessels and a multitude of smaller.

East Florida is the land of, my nativity, it has been the theatre of my life, and I expect it to be the depository of my bones. I promise myself, then, a shady tree in the rear ground of the stage and I hope to enjoy it free from censure or suspicion. His Excellency, Don Luis D'Onis while forming the treaty of its cession, spontaneously tendered me any vacancy of the Spanish consulates in the United States should I choose. I answered him, there could be none that would draw me from my contemplated retirement in Florida. I since called to Don Mateo de la Serna at Washington for the vice-consulate of East Florida without pay, the better to secure my retirement there, but heard nothing from him. My prospects in Cuba are good, but my feelings are wedded to Florida;

moreover, I have long thought I saw a mill stone hanging over that Island.

I presume, Sir, it would not be too much to suppose, that he who without stipend faithfully served his country for 20 odd years, thrice bore a part in saving it from the evils of revolution, and twice sustained a ruinous sack of his property in its service under one government, would not feel less its friend when fairly transferred, to another, and himself and his all within it.

I have the honor to subscribe myself, with great respect

Your obt. servt.,

**GEO. I. F. CLARKE.**

The Hon. John Q. Adams  
Department of State  
Washington.

Sir, Should you honor me by letter (for I cheerfully as an individual attend to anything that concerns Florida) please to direct for St. Marys, Georgia, and they will readily come to hand.

Written from Charleston, S. C.

1 May 1823.

Received on 14th of May.



LETTERS RELATING TO MACGREGOR'S  
ATTEMPTED CONQUEST OF  
EAST FLORIDA, 1817

<sup>1</sup> Headquarters, Fernandina  
17 July, 1817

My dear Sir,

Long before you receive this, you will have learnt of the capture of this place. I have therefore now to request that you will do me the favor you promised me at Baltimore, that is to communicate to your government my views in taking possession of this place. I shall look with impatience for your answer and I trust you will not attribute my silence to any other motives than the true one, a want of time and a multiplicity of business.

Any news or information that you have relative to our affairs, I trust you will do me the favor of sending me, and that I shall at least have two of your letters to my one. I trust everything will go on well here, although some of my materials are not of the best discription, but this I must expect when I consider that they are taken at random from a populous sea port Town. They appear to be much fonder of money than military fame and glory, but probably after a victory or two they will feel themselves inspired with more martial sentiment.

I beg the favor of your presenting my best regards to Judge Bland, as also to my friend, the Major. I also beg my respectful compliments to Mrs. Skinner and Mrs. Bland and requesting you to accept the as-

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<sup>2</sup>The originals of this and the following letter are to be found in Bureau of Index and Archives, Department of State, Washington, D. C.

surances of the most perfect regards, I remain, my dear Sir, most sincerely yours,

Gregor MACGREGOR.

To John Skinner, Postmaster  
Baltimore, Maryland.

PRIVATE

Baltimore, 30th July 1817.

Dear Sir-The inclosed reached me this evening. Allow me now to relate in detail the particulars of my intercourse with General MacGregor while in this city, in regard to his objects.

The day after his arrival here he sought an interview with me through Mr. Cy Hughes at my house where he continued to visit me almost daily during a residence of about two months. At first he was impenetrably reserved and circumspect-vainly endeavoring to collect funds without venturing to communicate to those from whom he desired to command them the specific point on which his proposed expedition was to operate. After some days he told me apparently with much candor and solicitude that as he believed, I possessed the confidence of the Government he would confide to me his plans and intentions-at several *times* he desired me to bear in mind our conversations, and requested should events make it necessary, that I would communicate them substantially to the Government.

He declared his object to be in the first, place to take possession of Amelia-thence to wrest the Floridas from Spain, when he should immediately call on the inhabitants by proclamation to designate (that is, should he succeed in getting a foothold) some of their most respectable fellow citizens to form a constitution on the model of some of the adjoining States. That so far as it might depend on him, he would en-

courage the existing disposition of the People in that Section to confederate with the United States-leaving it to the will and policy of this Government and to political circumstances as they might arise, to indicate the most favorable time for their admission into the Union. That in the meantime he would endeavor to hold them as the most eligible depot to collect and organize the supplies necessary to the establishment of South American independence. In connection with that great object he was inclined to view the temporary possession of the Floridas as under a provisional government as of the highest importance and utility.

He was moreover of the opinion that it would be compatible with the best policy of the United States, under the explanations here given, to connive at the occupation of them (Floridas) by a Patriot force--because, in that way, the Patriots might have access to the resources, and profit of the enterprising spirit of this Country, without necessarily involving a positive violation of any of our strictly neutral or pacific obligations -- To any complaint from Spain he thought we might sufficiently answer, that we were not responsible for any operations conducted beyond our jurisdiction in a territory claimed by her. Thus he was of opinion that our government might be relieved from the embarrassment resulting from the uncontrollable propensity of our citizens, acting under motives of cupidity (or others more honorable) to embark in the contest between Spain and her colonies in favor of the latter without paying in all cases a decent regard to the requirements of existing laws--that in this way we might enjoy the satisfaction of seeing that assistance rendered to the Patriots indirectly, which are forbidden to be directly offered by our actual relations with Spain. I warned him that he would have to encounter the suspicion of subserviency to the views of Great Britain, which, if entertained by our Govern-

ment on the ground of strongly indicative circumstances, ought and would prove fatal to his enterprise - against which he urged that Nature has so obviously decreed the Floridas to the United States on their passage from the hands of Spain, that all apprehension of an attempt to hold them, by any other power must be rebutted by the gross and manifest folly of such an undertaking-unless as a pretext for gratifying a previous disposition to engage in a war with the United States for some other object, the holding of the Floridas not being an attainable one. In these views and opinions he hoped the Government of the United States would coincide with him, at least so far as not to interpose any obstacles, a measure to which he conceived them not invited by any sound view of the interest of the country, much less by any sense of obligation to Spain, to aid in preserving the integrity of her possessions.

Such is the exposition of his views as developed to me in the course of numerous conversations. I know the Government has been warned from Philadelphia that there is reason to believe he may be in the reins of England, that accursed nightmare whose business it is to watch for and to extinguish the first sparks of liberty as they arise in all parts of the world. I will only say here that my private opinion is from much and minute observation that this conjecture as to MacGregor is not well founded. If it were necessary I would here more minutely describe *his character* but I have already said much-in doing which I have only fulfilled a promise repeatedly given.

Please, Sir, believe me to be truly yours,

J. SKINNER.

To John Quincy Adams  
Secretary of State

## NOTES AND COMMENT

The perilous and tragic adventure of Mrs. Perrine and her children, described in the account of the Indian Key massacre in this issue, must take its place among the most extraordinary of the many remarkable escapes of which there is authentic record in the long intermittent warfare through which our race took and held the country of the American Indian. As an officer of the Army (General Thomas W. Sherman), who visited the scene and talked with the survivors, told Mrs. Walker, "It was an escape from death at the hands of the Indians, from fire, and from drowning," all within a few hours, and by the narrowest margins.

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The reason for that three hundred years' struggle is understandable - it was, of course, a fight for possession of the land. While at times it is surprising, we may understand why the Indians so often continued the fight long after they must have known it to be hopeless: A few preferred to die rather than fall back or submit. With others, doubtless, a kind of reasonless, dogged perseverance kept them fighting. But likely the majority were only following their more spirited leaders. It would have been the same, or more so, had our own race been defenders.

But the spirit which led or urged the pioneer is not so readily understood. He was moved largely by a hope of gain: Beyond the settlements, land was his for the taking and he seemed to be getting something for nothing. There was the chance, too, that the outlying land was the better. A distant prospect usually pleases, and present troubles and disadvantages outweigh any the future may hold. And with some

there was the constant desire for what is new. But with these and other reasons for the steady advance of the pioneer in mind, there still lacks enough to fully understand why he takes his wife out into the wilderness where the danger of a horrible death at the hands of savages must be added to the absence of associates and of every comfort to which she has likely been accustomed, as well as the continuous hardships of such a life. Must there not be a spirit coming down with the race urging the individual onward.

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It is not satisfying to hold that man has come to be what he is through a series of changes, even if unmeasurably small and innumerable, brought about by chance alone and wholly by a power outside of himself - for man's growth would be inconceivable if it were not here before us - it is not convincing, nor tolerably satisfying. Is there a spirit coming down through the race urging him, not always, not necessarily, upward, but onward ; and is that spirit related to, or connected intimately with, or a part of, the Spirit of the universe.

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The leading article this time is dry-or, its author is quite sure it is. Admitting nothing, we'll not argue the question, but only suggest that those who find no interest there can claim no great measure of interest in the history of our State. The writing of history is not what it once was. Written history is largely a narrative of certain events and of the parts played by a few men; but events are only the high points of more or less continuous movements, and men can only lead or try to thwart the masses. The history of the beginnings and the hundred years' growth of our methods for choosing those of us who are to make, interpret, and enforce our laws is of more importance, if of less general interest, than a guess at why so-and-so killed

his friend, or enemy, in a duel ; or an answer to the vexed question whether the first railroad in the State ran from here to there.

Dr. Knauss says (though not for publication), "I have often wondered why this subject has not been worked up in each state. I know now. I've never worked harder with such meagre results ; the article is almost a digest of election laws, past and present, compressed into a few pages." But he overlooks the interest we find in tracing the successive efforts made to safeguard the choice of the majority and to compel the ins to be fair to the outs.

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In losing Dr. Knauss, who is leaving Florida for work in a larger field, the Historical Society feels a loss equal to that of the State College for Women, and the results of his five years' work there are abundantly evident now and must be discernible for a long time to come. The people of Tallahassee seem to have a more general interest in the State's history than do those of any other section. A part of this interest was aroused by the Centennial Celebration, and part because it is the capital city ; but to Dr. Knauss's efforts a portion of that awakening is due. His interest in the Society has been fruitful for the body. His article, published in the Quarterly last year, *The Importance of Historical Societies* was helpful, and he has lent assistance in other ways. But of more lasting value is his constant teaching, felt far outside the circle of his classes, that the materials remaining for the writing of Florida's history must be searched for, brought to light, and preserved now before it is too late. His own efforts towards the accomplishment of that work have been a stimulus to the rest of us.

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Dr. Joseph Y. Porter, State Health Officer (Florida) 1889-1917, now President, Chamber of Com-

merce, Key West, has issued ***Looking Backward Over Fifty Years of Health Work in Florida***. This is a series of reminiscences and notes first published in ***Journal of the Florida Medical Association***, July, 1925-January, 1926 ; and now reprinted complete. Mention was made here, last year, of Dr. Porter's valuable **services** to the State. From the time of its establishment, in 1889, for more than a quarter of a century he was State Health Officer, and was in fact the leader of public health work in Florida ; hence his volume is of the nature of a history of the work of the health department of the State government; and as the period covered several yellow fever epidemics and the occurrence of other dangers to the general health of the State, his narrative is exceedingly interesting.

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A. D. Powers, of St. Petersburg, has issued a pamphlet of sixteen pages, ***The Dade Massacre and Dade Memorial Park***. This is illustrated with sixteen half-page half-tone engravings of scenes in the park showing all the monuments, the log breastwork, and other features. Mr. Powers's interest in the battle and in the park has prompted him to publish this sketch. He says

But the Commissioners<sup>1</sup> who have done so well, must have an annual appropriation to keep this beautiful park up to the standard to which it was established. If this little book can in a wee mite help to get the proper recognition of Dade Park, and even a modest support for maintenance of the memorial, I will feel well paid for the effort of issuing it. . . . . This park is well worth a visit to Bushnell.

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<sup>1</sup>J. C. B. Koonce, of Tavares; Frederick Cubberly, of Gainesville; and Mrs. A. M. Roland, of Bushnell.



The American Historical Association must not be looked upon as in any way a parent to the Florida Historical Society and the like societies of other states - rather, it is a big brother ; and is such a brother in all which that implies. Its growth and a broadening of the work it is carrying on - a work of genuine public service - must be of substantial benefit to our own Society, and to what we ourselves have set out to do. Its journal, the *American Historical Review*, is pre-eminent. Its activities are vital, but necessarily restricted ; hence, the need of an endowment is evident. A Committee on Endowment has undertaken to supply this need, with Solon J. Buck, Columbia University, New York, as secretary. Membership in the Association is by election, but only application is necessary ; the assistant-secretary is Patty W. Washington, Woodward Building, Washington, D. C.

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Roger Perrine DeLano has become a Life Member of the Society. He is a descendant, of the fourth generation, of Dr. Henry Perrine, is nine years of age, and a resident of Miami. We are especially pleased to add to our membership one of his name and lineage, and trust that his interest in the Society and its work will grow and equal that which his ancestor so clearly showed in the State of his choice.

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The appeal for Contributing Members, in the last number of the Quarterly, has been without result.

During the past quarter the following have become members of the Society, their interest and support is highly valued -

***Life Member***

Roger Perrine DeLano

Miami

**Active Members**

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Blanding, A. H.                                | Bartow                            |
| Clearwater Public Library                      | Clearwater                        |
| Clemmons, H. R.                                | Citra                             |
| Crosby, W. J.                                  | Citra                             |
| Gary, William                                  | Ocala                             |
| Harvard College Library                        | Cambridge, Mass.                  |
| Henry E. Huntington Library<br>and Art Gallery | San Gabriel, Calif.               |
| Iseman, Burgess D.                             | Jacksonville                      |
| Jenkins, Margaret H.                           | St. Petersburg                    |
| Lamar, G. B.                                   | St. Augustine                     |
| Leigh, Samuel C.                               | Ocala                             |
| McKee, Mrs. Louis C.                           | Hibernia                          |
| Parker, Sheldon C.                             | Jacksonville                      |
| Reese, Mrs. J. Simpson                         | Pensacola                         |
| Ray, Father Samuel H.                          | Loyola University,<br>New Orleans |
| Smith, O. A.                                   | Haines City                       |
| University of Florida<br>Library               | Gainesville                       |
| Wall, Perry G.                                 | Tampa                             |
| Williams, E. C.                                | Citra                             |

**Donations-**

From Joseph Y. Porter, the author,  
***Looking Backward Over Fifty Years of Health  
Work in Florida.***

From A. D. Powers, the author,  
***The Dade Massacre and Dade Memorial Park.***

From W. S. Cawthon  
***Sonder-Abdruck aus den Gottingschen Gelehrten  
Anzeigen unter der Augsicht der Gesell  
schaft der Wissen schaften.***

From Moses Folsom  
Deland, ***Florida Days.***  
Winter, Florida, ***The Land of Enchantment.***  
***Why I Like Florida.***  
***Florida Resources and Inducements.***