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Report of President F. P. Fleming to the Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society, Held November 19th, 1907

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Upon the organization of the Florida Historical Society in November of 1902, all turned to Major Fairbanks as its proper head and he was unanimously chosen president, holding such position to the time of his death.

His name, influence and energies were potent factors in the success which the Society has attained, and his memory will ever be an inspiration to those who labor in the fields of Florida's history and for Florida's prosperity.

Report of President F. P. Fleming to the Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society, Held November 19th, 1907.

Gentlemen of the Florida Historical Society— It gives me pleasure to again greet you on this occasion of the annual meeting of the society. Though we have failed to accomplish within the past year all that we had hoped, much has been done to encourage us in the work which promises so much for our State. At the time of our last meeting, as then reported, we were in debt considerably more than the small balance in the treasury. By securing six life members, paying \$50 each and collecting all but a small portion of the annual dues of members, we have been enabled to pay off all indebtedness, and, by the employment of an assistant to the secretary, to keep the room of the society open during the year for three days in each week and to add, by purchase, to our collection of literature, with a balance in the treasury of \$86.79.

In accordance with a resolution adopted at the last annual meeting, a neat pamphlet, containing the report of the president, the constitution and by-laws of the society and a list of membership, was published, which has been sent to all members and many others in the state.

A great effort was made to get some state aid for the society through a small appropriation by the last legislature. I prepared a bill for that purpose, which I placed in the hands of the senator and a member of the house from this county, whom I personally interviewed on the subject. I also wrote, asking the influ-

ence of members of the society outside of this city. Unfortunately a serious illness prevented my presence at Tallahassee during the session and such further explanation before the house committee as, I am inclined to think, would have secured a favorable report. The bill was reported unfavorably by that committee and, though it passed the senate unanimously, was lost in the house by a majority of three. I still hope that the next legislature will provide some aid for our work which, with our small means, has already accomplished so much in the interest of Florida.

Since our last meeting we have added thirty-six volumes on Florida to our collection, most of them by purchase, besides a number of pamphlets, maps, documents, etc., and photographs of prominent state officials, also a group of the signers of the ordinance of secession of the state of Florida, donated by Miss Minnie Sanderson, daughter of Col. John P. Sanderson, one of the signers.

I make special mention of an interesting relic which tells a sad story of the past, when it was customary to settle personal difficulties by a meeting in accordance with the code of honor, which not infrequently ended in tragedy. I refer to the rifle used by Gen. Leigh Reid in a duel with Col. Augustus Alston, near Tallahassee, just across the Georgia line, in 1840, which resulted in the unfortunate death of Col. Alston. By reason of the prominence of the parties engaged (both residents of Florida) and the fatal result, this was one of the noted duels which marked the history of our country during the first half of the nineteenth century. This rifle was the property of Dr. Edward Bradford, who acted as the second of Gen. Reid, and was kindly donated to the society by his grandson, Mr. Edward Bradford Eppes of Tallahassee.

I would also make special mention of a most valuable donation, among others, by Miss Caroline Mays Brevard of Tallahassee, being the commission of her grandfather, Gen. Richard K. Call, as territorial governor of Florida, under date of March 19, 1841. This interesting document, on parchment bears the signature of W. H. Harrison, president of the United States, and Daniel Webster, secretary of State. Gov. Call had before held the position of governor of the Territory of Florida. During his incumbency, on November 21, 1836, he com-

maned the troops which engaged and defeated the hostile Seminoles, in the battle of Wahoo Swamp, one of the important battles of that seven years' bloody struggle with the Florida Indians.

I append to this report a list of our collections within the year.* Such additions, together with those formerly reported, constitute a collection of rare value and a great interest to all who feel a pride in our beautiful state, rich in its romantic, tragic and industrial history.

We are under obligations for donations to the society during the year to Mr. Clarence B. Moore of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, who for a number of years has made extensive investigation of Florida Indian mounds; the Peabody Academy of Salem, Mass., Mr. A. E. Phillips of Sanford, Mr. J. Y. Detwiler of New Smyrna, Gen. Fred L. Robertson of Tallahassee, Mr. Edward B. Eppes and Miss Caroline M. Brevard of Tallahassee, the Smithsonian Institution, Washington; Mr. Samuel A. Swann of Fernandina, Mr. Julian C. Yonge of Pensacola, the Florida Times-Union, Mr. T. Tipping, Miss Minnie Sanderson and Miss F. Irene Bacon of Jacksonville. I have also had the pleasure of contributing somewhat to our collection.

We have recently added an appropriate show case for the display of relics.

I urge upon each member of our society, as well as other friends throughout the state, to make an effort to procure additions to our collections. I know, by my own experience, how much can be accomplished by personal effort in obtaining literature and relics. Remember that nothing pertaining to Florida is too insignificant to be gratefully received.

Under a resolution of the Board of Directors adopted August 19, last, I have investigated a proposed work on Florida to be published by a well known southern publisher, which will treat specially of the various industries of the state and its political history, containing also biographical sketches of prominent Floridians. From the standing of the gentlemen connected with the proposed publication, the character and scope of the work itself, and the fact that it is in the direct line of the objects of this society and will be a valuable addition to the literature on Florida, I have commended the work and by

*The collections for the past year are not published herewith separately, but are included in the list of all collections.

authority of the directors have entered into an agreement with those engaged in the work authorizing them, upon terms agreed upon, to procure new members for the society.

I regret to have to report only two additions to our membership during the year. It is very important to increase our membership, as the dues of members is our only source of income. I, therefore, recommend and urge upon each member to secure at least one new member for the society. We have been unable to avail ourselves of the opportunity to purchase certain old works on Florida, out of print, for lack of funds; the same reason has so far prevented us from publishing a periodical which would add greatly to the interest in and the usefulness of the society. We are hoping, however, that we will be able to commence such publication in January, next, but can give no assurance to that effect.

The success of the society so far, with the small means at our command, is most encouraging. Let us enter upon the coming year with a determination to make an earnest and united effort to promote in every way the interesting and most useful work in which we are engaged.

CATALOGUE OF COLLECTIONS.

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, ETC.

La Florida del Ynca (Spanish), 1605, De la Vega.
Histoire de la Floride (French), 1735, De la Vega.
Hakluyt's Voyages, 1600, Hakluyt.

The Letters of Dr. Diego Alveres Chanca, 1494.
Relating to the second voyage of Columbus to America, 1907, A. M. Fernandez de Ybarra.

Life and Adventures of Hernando DeSoto, 1858, Wilmer.

Conquest of Florida, 1835, Irving.

DeSoto in the Land of Flowers, 1899, Grace King.

The Spanish Settlements In the United States, 1513-1674, two volumes, Lowrey.

The Unwritten History of Old St. Augustine. Copies of letters and papers in archives in Seville.

St. Augustine, Fla., 1869. By an English visitor.

History of St. Augustine, Fairbanks.

History of St. Augustine, 1881, Dewhurst.