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Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society at Tallahassee, Thursday, November 13th, 1924

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AT
TALLAHASSEE, THURSDAY, NO-
VEMBER 13TH, 1924

The twenty-second annual meeting of The Florida Historical Society was called to order in the Methodist Church of Tallahassee at 10.30 A. M., November 13th, 1924. Dr. Edward Conradi of The State College for Women delivered the invocation.

This was Capitol Week at Tallahassee, and the meeting was favored with an interested audience of more than fifty persons.

Members of the Society present were:

Mrs. W. L. Cawthon	DeFuniak Springs
Mrs. John M. Cook	Tallahassee
Mrs. John Chipman	<i>Corinth</i> , Miss.
Dr. Edward Conradi	Tallahassee
Dr. J. G. DuPuis	Lemon City
Hon. John Y. Detwiler	New Smyrna
Dr. Horace Drew	Jacksonville (proxy)
Dr. J. H. Durkee	Jacksonville, (proxy)
Sarah A. Durkee	Jacksonville (proxy)
Hon. Duncan U. Fletcher	Washington, D. C.
Hon. R. L. Eaton, Sr.	Monticello
Captain C. Seton Fleming.	Jacksonville
Judge J. B. Gaines	Tallahassee
Mr. Ray C. Green	Daytona (proxy)
Hon. H. L. Grady	Apalachicola
Dr. Jas. O. Knauss	Tallahassee
Miss Mary D. Lewis	Tallahassee
Hon. W. H. Milton	Marianna
Dr. A. H. Phinney	St. Petersburg
Hon. Guyte P. McCord	Tallahassee
Hon. John G. Ruge	Apalachicola
Hon. A. H. Roberts	Tallahassee
Dr. Jas. A. Robertson	Stetson University, Deland
Mr. Arthur T. Williams	Jacksonville
Prof. Arthur Williams	Tallahassee
Mr. Francis M. Williams	<i>Jacksonville</i>
Miss Lucy M. Williams	Jacksonville
Miss Isabella M. Williams	Jacksonville
Mrs. A. M. Williamson	Tallahassee
Hon. J. B. Whitfield	Tallahassee
Mr. J. C. Yonge	Pensacola (proxy)

Hon. Arthur T. Williams, President of the Society, announced a quorum present, and stated that the meeting would be opened by the three speakers of the day, after which the regular order of business would be taken up, and that all present were invited to remain until the close. He introduced the first speaker, Professor James O. Knauss, of the Florida State College for Women. The Professor chose as his subject "Historical Societies ; their Influence and Possibilities".

He had been unable, he said, to ascertain the exact number of historical societies in the United States, but thought that over a thousand were now active. There are several kinds of historical societies : those interested in the widest fields, exemplified by The American Historical Association, which is the apex and pinnacle of all historical societies, anywhere ; those interested in a specific event, as the D. A. R.; regional societies, like the Mississippi Valley Association ; State Societies, like our own, and like the California Pioneers Association which, starting in 1850, only one year after the eventful '49, indicates, said the Professor, that those old pioneers knew they were historical figures.

Enlarging upon this form of Society, and its value, he stated that the eminence of the New England States. in our country's history was largely due to their early creation of societies to preserve their records. To all parts of the country New England has contributed men trained in this work ; to our own State she sent William A. Whitehead, who sojourned among us as an editor of renown, at Key West, and who was sent from Florida to help organize the great New Jersey Historical Society. Searching the rolls of most of our historical societies, Mr. Knauss had found that none were without inspiration from New England.

Then there are local societies, such as those interested in the history of a particular church, or parish, or other institution; and societies interested in certain groups of

people, like the immigrant societies, the Scottish-American and German-American societies.

All of these are trying to collect material and make it available for our use, and preserve it for posterity. A recent important history, for instance, could not have been written if certain old books and papers had not been found in an old farmhouse.

And all these various kinds of societies co-operate in the great work; they publish their discoveries. When the American Historical Association meets, there is a meeting of all historical societies. That Association helps and encourages the smaller societies, and our society can do the same by forming local chapters and groups and encouraging them, and by stimulating the common interest in history and the value of historical material.

Collect, preserve, and publish, is the ideal aim, briefly stated. It is not necessary to build a palatial structure; organize many local societies, get them interested in the material around them and in collecting and preserving it, and get the legislature interested enough to make an appropriation for the work.

Dr. Knauss' address was intensely interesting and inspiring. It was lightened now and then by a delightful humor so that pleased interest was maintained throughout. The applause he received at the close was an honorable and deserved tribute.

Captain C. Seton Fleming paid gentle homage to the people of Tallahassee and brought it home by dwelling upon the names of those connected with its early history and development, giving occasional intimate and interpretive touches.

His contribution was warmly received.

Senator Duncan U. Fletcher took the opportunity to record his impressions of the Centennial. Expressing deep personal gratification at the enthusiastic rallying of so large a number to this celebration, he admired the good

taste and efficiency of the management, and considered the event a marked success.

He then delivered a remarkably comprehensive sketch of the history of Florida, adorning it here and there with generalizations that were exceedingly interesting. "The State of Florida," he said, "is the oldest in discovery ; the youngest in development. Much romance and beauty have been hers, but cruelty, fanaticism and incessant warfare have retarded and stunted her growth until quite recent times." Two centuries after the first settlement, she had accumulated a population of but seven thousand. He then contrasted those dark periods with the present and the future and impressed his hearers with the blessings of their daily life in Florida today, and the soundness of the foundations upon which to build their hopes for the future.

After inviting all present to remain, President Williams in the chair began the regular order of business.

His report as presented was received with commendation and ordered filed in the minutes.

The report of Dr. Robinson, Treasurer, was read and accepted ; it showed a balance on hand of \$86.76.

Under New Business, Mr. Fleming suggested a discussion of the expediency of increasing the annual membership dues from \$2.00 to \$5.00. Dr. A. H. Phinney, who came with credentials as representative of The St. Petersburg Historical Society and was admitted to our membership, moved that the subject be referred to a committee. Mr. McCord thought that the membership could be increased more easily than the dues and promised to get fifty new members from his own field. Mr. Phinney then withdrew his motion and promised to equal Mr. McCord's achievement.

Professor Arthur Williams moved the formation of a committee¹ to persuade the State Legislature to appoint a commissioner of archives. The motion prevailed.

¹ Committee - Arthur Williams, J. B. Gaines, Guyte P. McCord, J. C. Yonge, C. Seton Fleming, Arthur T. Williams.

Mr. McCord moved that a membership committee² of five be appointed. Carried.

The Chairman stated that after careful consideration he would appoint the personnel of these committees.

Mr. Phinney, in behalf of The St. Petersburg Historical Society tendered an invitation to The Florida Historical Society to hold its next annual meeting in St. Petersburg. It was heartily accepted.

The election of officers then proceeded, and the secretary was instructed to cast a ballot to fill the offices as follows :

President	Arthur T. Williams
1st Vice-President	C. Seton Fleming
2nd Vice-President	P. K. Yonge
Treasurer	Fred W. Hoyt
Secretary	Francis M. Williams
Assistant-Secretary	Emma Rochelle Williams
Editor of Quarterly	J. C. Yonge

and for four Directors as follows:

A. H. Phinney	J. C. Yonge
Guyte P. McCord	Philip S. May

Mr. Fleming moved the appointment of a committee to consider the advisability of amending the charter to permit a larger directorate. The motion carried and the chair appointed Messrs. Fleming, Phinney and McCord.

Three members of the Society having died during the year the chair appointed Messrs. Fleming, McCord and Professor Arthur Williams a committee on resolutions to prepare suitable memoria on behalf of the Society.

The minutes of this meeting were read and approved and the meeting adjourned.

FRANCIS M. WILLIAMS,
Secretary.

Approved by the members in session
November 13, 1924.

² Committee - Guyte P. McCord, J. C. Yonge, A. H. Phinney, Agnew Welsh, Joseph Y. Porter.