

1924

Report of Arthur T. Williams, President, to the Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society Tallahassee, November 13th, 1924

Arthur T. Williams

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>
University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

Williams, Arthur T. (1924) "Report of Arthur T. Williams, President, to the Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society Tallahassee, November 13th, 1924," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 3 : No. 3 , Article 10.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol3/iss3/10>

REPORT OF ARTHUR T. WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT, TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TALLAHASSEE, NOVEMBER 13TH, 1924

Members of The Florida Historical Society:

The By-Laws of the Florida Historical Society require the officers of the Society to submit in annual meeting for the information of its members, the reports, activities, and condition of the Society for the past twelve months ; but before entering into the regular routine of business, I desire, personally, and in behalf of the Florida Historical Society, to thank the citizens of Tallahassee and those patriotic men and women having charge of the Centennial now being celebrated here for their courtesy in inviting us to assemble in this city for our annual meeting and for their thoughtfulness in providing the place of meeting. It is an honor which the Florida Historical Society greatly appreciates. We feel that the featuring of our meeting on the attractive program of the Centennial Celebration will, in itself, be of great benefit to the Society and it is with deep appreciation that we acknowledge your courtesy. We wish to offer our felicitations on the great success of the Celebration. The program for the occasion is a fine visual lesson in Florida history and has been, not only instructive and intensely interesting, but very greatly enjoyed by all fortunate enough to attend.

I am glad to report that flagging interest in the Society has been greatly stimulated and new members are added weekly to our roll. Our membership now includes 5 Life Members, 4 Honorary Members and 117 Active Members.¹ During the past year we have enrolled fifty-eight new members.

I wish to acknowledge in behalf of the Society the receipt of \$4.00 donation from an honorary member, Hon.

¹ There are now 168 members.

John Y. Detwiler of New Smyrna. The Society is also in receipt of a very valuable contribution from Miss Hazel Barsa of Daytona, through the courtesy of Mr. E. W. Bailey, Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce of Fernandina, in the form of a letter written by one "G. I. F. C.", describing in detail the capture of Fernandina by the Patriots in 1812. This letter is dated March 1812 and was written only a few days after this historic event. We regard it as a very valuable addition to our records.

In the year 1920 it was decided by a vote of the members of the Society to send to the University of Florida at Gainesville, all records and relics of the Society, in the hope and belief that by so doing an interest in our work would be aroused among the students of the University. An additional reason was the expectation of help from the University in publishing our quarterly magazine. Neither of these expectations was realized, and at a meeting of the Directors held in Jacksonville in September last, it was decided to remove these records and relics from the University to Jacksonville into a fire-proof building at 7 West Forsyth Street where they will be accessible to the officers and members of the Society and to the general public. Captain C. Seton Fleming, the First Vice-President of the Society, personally superintended the removal of these valuable properties and we are greatly indebted to him for his painstaking and careful work.

We are happy to report that The Lion's Club of Jacksonville, acting on the motion of our Secretary, Mr. Francis M. Williams, has started a movement to erect a building in one of the parks of the city for the permanent home of the Florida Historical Society. This movement, I believe, will be carried out successfully and all who are interested in the preservation of our State's historical data will appreciate Mr. Williams' interest in this greatly needed phase of our work.

In the year 1908, under the Presidency of Governor

Francis P. Fleming, the publication of a quarterly magazine was started. Six numbers were issued between April 1908 and July 1909. The publication of this quarterly was suspended owing to lack of funds after the death of Governor Fleming. Last Spring, your Officers and Directors, realizing the great necessity of a publication to serve as a medium of intercourse between the members of the Society, and to properly bring to the attention of the public the work of the Society, decided to resume the publication of the quarterly magazine. The first issue was printed in July and the second issue in October. While not a pretentious publication it has aroused fresh interest in the Society and the work it is trying to accomplish. If the Society is to succeed the publication of the quarterly magazine must be continued and must become more interesting, more voluminous, and more beneficial to its members and to the general public with each succeeding issue. There were sufficient funds in the Treasury to pay for the July issue and the additional funds for the October issue and for the issue of January, next, have been provided. The cost of the quarterly will be, approximately, from \$750.00 to \$900.00 per year, depending, of course, upon the number of pages it contains. Our present membership is 117 at \$2.00 per year, or \$234.00, which will leave a deficit of \$516.00 or \$766.00. If the publication of the quarterly magazine is to continue additional revenue must be provided. The continued publication is vital to the life of the Society and I earnestly urge that the question of the best manner of raising the additional revenue required to continue it be considered at this meeting. Also I would suggest that an Editor be chosen for the publication of the quarterly magazine, either by the members or the selection be left to the discretion of the Directors.

During the past year we have lost through death two of our most valued members, Mrs. Mina Reid of Jacksonville, and the Treasurer of the Society, Dr. H. Rob-

inson, also of that city. Mrs. Reid was the daughter of a Florida pioneer developer, Major T. J. Burrin, and took great interest in the work of the Society. Her death is deplored by many who have the history of our State at heart and the Florida Historical Society feels her passing to be a personal loss. On last Sunday morning, November 9th, we received the sad news of Dr. Robinson's death. The Society feels that it has lost not only a most faithful officer but an actively interested member and friend whose place will be difficult to fill. Though well advanced in years, Dr. Robinson gave to the financial phase of our work efficient and unfailing consideration. Two days before he was stricken in his last illness he compiled the report of the Treasurer which will be read here this morning. It is with deep and sincere regret that we thus publicly acknowledge his loss.

Arthur T. Williams.