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## The Annual Meeting of the Florida Historical Society: Minutes

Florida Historical Society  
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THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
FLORIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Held at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida  
February 29th, 1932

MINUTES

The twenty-ninth annual meeting of The Florida Historical Society (now seventy-five years since its founding) was called to order in the beautiful hall of the Woman's Club at Winter Park at 10:30 A.M. February 29th, 1932, by President Arthur T. Williams. On the walls were hung fourteen life-size oil paintings by the distinguished Valencia artist Luis Felipe de Usabal—a complete series of the "Conquistadores" from Columbus to Cortez.

The Rev. Edgar L. Pennington offered the invocation.

The President introduced Dr. Hamilton Holt, President of Rollins College, who cordially welcomed the Society to Winter Park. "I am rather surprised", he said, "to find myself welcoming a historical society, for I have always been far more interested in the future than in the past. I must be getting older, for I also find myself collecting antiquities.

"It appears to me," he continued, "that historians are too much occupied with events of the past, and too little with current affairs. They don't take enough interest in recording and preserving for posterity the things that they are perfectly sure of : what's happening today—who lives at such and such a place ; but prefer to dig out, with more or less accuracy, such information fifty or a hundred years later. I don't know what should be preserved for future seekers after knowledge but historians should be good guessers and try to provide it."

President Williams responded. "The Florida Historical Society is doing what it can along those lines. It has pictures of nearly all the governors of the State, and a complete series of the carpet-baggers. It has specimens of all Indian costumes from the time of the first landing of the Spaniards."

"I am very much pleased that the State's oldest historical society should come to its oldest college. It means much to this Society to be the guest of Rollins. Driving here, I was struck by the changes along the way. I remember when the objects of interest along the journey were forests, pioneers, log cabins, and Indians. The forests have been superseded by beautiful buildings such as appear here on the campus of Rollins College, which has made such remarkable progress under your guidance."

The chair introduced Don Luis Usabal, the distinguished Spanish artist who created the Conquistadores who were now looking down upon us from the surrounding walls.

"In preparation for those paintings", he said, "I spent ten years in travel and study. It is very difficult to get at the truth of things. Etchings and other records which appear to be contemporaneous with your subject were made, as likely as not, a hundred years after his death. My idea, first, was to paint men-strong personalities-men able to do things ; and second, to have those paintings become history. I had to get into the environment of those men, and there await the inspiration which comes from - I know not where. The feel of a painting lies in the soul of the artist, and he cannot listen to others-literary men for instance-who would tell him how to paint&modernistic; etc. A historical painting should be National Art, or Florida art, but not mixed. The paintings, with their landscapes, then become history."

Don Usabal's earnestness and sincerity were much appreciated and applauded by his audience.

The chair introduced Senator W. T. Cash, State Librarian of Florida.

"Libraries", he said, "have been fostered by governments for at least five thousand years. The Assyrians built up a library of fifty thousand volumes at Nineveh ; the Jews, their chronicals of the kings ; the Romans under Caesar and Ptolemy the greatest library of ancient times at Alexandria. During the dark ages, monks in monasteries (the Church and Government were then woven together) preserved all the records they could secure. After the renaissance France established its Library Nationale. The British Museum. The Library of Congress, whose main object is the preservation of the history of the American people. After the War of 1812 state libraries were founded.

"A state library and a state librarian are therefore nothing new. Florida's first legislative council provided for state archives, a state library, and a paid librarian. When Mr. Bloxham was secretary of state he reported eight thousand volumes on hand and urged that a suitable place be provided for them. After reconstruction, things cultural were largely neglected, but later Governors Jennings and Broward recommended a state library building.

"There are many valuable books in your State Library : American State Papers, executive documents, reports of committees and of various institutions and associations ; fifty bound volumes of newspapers. They are not complete but the work of filling in the gaps is constantly progressing.

"The largest appropriation for purchasing material has been \$1750 in one year; it is now \$1000. That fund is spent for Floridiana: histories, travels, local chronicles, newspapers, maps and pamphlets. Your

Quarterly magazine is especially cherished. It is my dream to see a beautiful state library building."

The Senator wove much humor into his interesting talk and was warmly applauded.

The chair introduced Mrs. A. E. Dick, former president of the Woman's Club of Winter Park and a leader in many philanthropic causes. Mrs. Dick gave some delightful reminiscences of the Spanish-American war days in Tampa, and many vivid sketches of the officers and correspondents stationed there. Headquarters was the Tampa Bay Hotel which her husband reorganized for use as such and she confessed that "even war has its attractions when one experiences it in beautiful moonlit gardens crowded with bright uniforms".

But her talk closed with a look at the other side and a lament over the horror and wastage of war.

Miss Virginia McCall sang charmingly "Fromajadas", a folk song from Minorca which was introduced into Florida in 1760 at New Smyrna and is still well known in St. Augustine. It was customary for bands of young people to sing it on Easter Eve before the homes of the leading people and the singers were always rewarded with cheese cakes, hence its name. It is a rhythmic chant of great beauty and must be very fine indeed when sung in chorus.

Professor R. M. Smith, assistant-professor of history at Rollins, read a valuable paper on racial strains in Florida which is to be published in the **QUARTERLY**.

The meeting adjourned for luncheon.

Ninety persons lunched together at the Whistling Kettle Tea Room, which had been arranged for the occasion. The waiters were all dressed in toreador costumes and carried themselves with appropriate jauntiness.

Dr. Holt opened with—"Dr. Albert Shaw, editor of the Review of Reviews, is the official introducer of

this gathering, and here I find that I have to introduce the introducer."

Dr. Shaw retorted that as this was a historical party, he must himself be vouched for, and went on to express his enjoyment of the morning's exercises. He agreed with Dr. Holt's appeal to historians to preserve current records and added, "they should indeed be safely preserved, like the architecture and other investments of boom days, which cannot be taken away from Florida." . . . "I have myself contributed some eighty volumes of my interpretation of current history ; and there is material everywhere that ought to be preserved."

He introduced Mr. Clinton Scollard as "one who writes poetry in appreciation of history. . . , expressing in poetry the essence of real history".

Mr. Scollard read three jolly, lilting original poems : "A Spanish Don", "Captain Maldenado," and "The Ballad of Jean Ribault". The fourth, "Concerning Sir Francis Drake" was more serious. The opinion of the meeting was exactly expressed by Dr. Shaw when he thanked Mr. Scollard and said, "no poems could have been better conceived ; they were charming and lovely".

#### A BALLAD OF JEAN RIBAULT

Menendez was a brave man, and so was Jean Ribault;  
In God's bright light they loved to fight if they but found a  
foe;  
A man of Spain—a man of France—no more one need to  
know.

"Now he courts death," in one brief breath stout Menendez  
declared,  
"Who dares to settle on these lands where we were first who  
dared,  
He marched his troops out on parade, and his keen blade he  
bared.

And there was slaughter where he led—a grizzly tale forby-  
And many groaned and many bled, men not afraid to die,  
Then there were livid corpses swung against a palm-set sky.

When valiant Jean Ribault turned back from sailing on the  
sea  
The Spaniards sprung their girdling snare—a luckless soul  
was he,  
For what were his poor hundred pikes, one pike to more than  
three!

They held a parley in that place, foe fronting bitter foe,  
And though the victors swore by Grace they would not work  
him woe,  
That was an end, a sorry end, for gallant Jean Ribault.

It was a merry mode they had in those grim elder days  
When strife was all the bread of life, but now—God's be the  
praise!-  
We who have followed after them, we go our pleasant ways.

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

Dr. Shaw then introduced guests present as follows :

Mrs. William F. Blackman, executive secretary for  
Florida of the League of Nations

Don Emilio Carles ; Spanish vice-consul

General John J. Carty ; of whom Dr. Shaw said, "I  
have been running my magazine for two years  
upon ideas furnished by my friends Carty and  
Edison."

Senator Cash: building up the State Library at Tal-  
lahassee

Dr. Charles W. Dabney ; noted educator who is now  
writing a history of the progress of education in  
the South

David R. Dunham ; president, St. Augustine Historical  
Society

The Rev. James J. Glass

President Hamilton Holt

Mrs. McKay ; president Sons & Daughters of Territorial Florida

David Moretzsohn, Brazilian consul at Jacksonville

Mrs. D. H. Morris, sponsor of a universal language

Rev. E. L. Pennington ; author of The Early Church in Florida

Rose Mills Powers, poet

Miss Annie Russell, noted actress now preparing for the opening of the beautiful theatre on the campus

Don Usabal, the artist of Valencia

Arthur T. Williams, president Florida Historical Society

Mrs. Wills, patron of art and philanthropist

Minnie Moore-Willson, author The Seminoles of Florida

Opie Read, novelist

“And that’s the list that was furnished me”, said Dr. Shaw, after each guest had risen and acknowledged the introduction, “but I see many others present who are equally distinguished and I regret that they were not included”.

Dr. Shaw called upon Mr. Opie Read, the “inimitable story teller”. Mr. Read said : “History is the progressive memory of mankind and the mother of wisdom.” Then came story after story, keeping the party in hilarious mood.

The business session was resumed with vice-president Cubberly in the chair.

The president’s report was read and adopted.  
(post)

The treasurer’s report was read and adopted.  
(post)

The chair appointed a committee to nominate officers for the ensuing year who retired a short time, and returned with the following nominations :

president,	Frederick C. Cubberly
1st vice president,	Arthur T. Williams
2d vice president,	P. K. Yonge
treasurer,	T. Frederick Davis
secretary,	Francis M. Williams
	Frank Drew
	C. Seton Fleming
	Alfred J. Hanna
directors,	Mrs. Eloise Robinson Ott
	George P. Raney
	Albert H. Roberts
	John P. Stokes
	Julien C. Yonge

Upon motion the nominations were ordered closed and the secretary instructed to cast a ballot for all the officers and directors named, which he thereupon did and they were declared elected.

Mr. Pennington offered a motion of appreciation and thanks to Julien C. Yonge, editor of the **QUARTERLY**, and to Emma Rochelle Porter, assistant editor, which was unanimously approved and carried.

Mr. Pennington also moved that the name of John Forbes be remembered by members of the Society when names of streets, parks, monuments, etc., were required. A recent issue of the **QUARTERLY** disclosed that John Forbes was a real figure in the State's history.

Mr. C. Seton Fleming awarded the U. D. C. gold medal for victory in the State historical contest to Miss Ruth Jeanne Bellamy, who was present and accepted the honor gracefully.

Mr. Moretzsohn, Brazilian consul, illustrated present-day Brazil by moving picture films, which were greatly enjoyed.

The meeting then adjourned to inspect the exhibit of Floridiana in the college library and to attend the tea given to the Society in Mayflower Hall.

**FRANCIS M. WILLIAMS**

*Secretary*

Those present were (members of the Society thus \*) :

Luis Usabel, New York; Emily K. Herron, Winter Park; Winifred A. Herron, Winter Park; Adelaide E. Abbe, Winter Park; Clara B. Ward, Winter Park; Lucy E. Fairbanks, Woodstock, Conn.; Rhea M. Smith, Winter Park; \*Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Williams, Jacksonville; \*Lucy S. Williams, Jacksonville; \*C. Seton Fleming, Jacksonville; \*Mrs. A. W. Underwood, St. Augustine; Mrs. Elizabeth Fogg, St. Augustine; Mrs. Antonia G. Lamb, Winter Park; \*Mrs. Edward Jelks, Jacksonville; \*Mrs. Herbert Lamson, Jacksonville; \*Mrs. William J. Manning, Jacksonville; Mrs. Esther B. Ferguson, Buffalo, N. Y.; Georgiana Hill, Maitland; \*Rose Mills Powers, Winter Park; W. Harvey Waits, Gainesville; \*F. C. Cubberly, Gainesville; L. S. Strong, New York; L. S. Higbee, Washington, D. C.; Mr. and Mrs. Louis Boisot, Chicago, Ill; Pauline Boisot, Chicago, Ill.; Mrs. C. W. Stiles, Washington, D. C.; Margaret Fuller Rogers, Oconomowac, Wis.; Mrs. W. L. Roney, Rollins College; Martha Smith, Winter Park; Mrs. R. A. Smith, Winter Park; \*Edgar L. Pennington, Ocala; \*Francis M. Williams, Jacksonville; Mrs. Wm. T. Councilman, Boston, Mass.; Mrs. Huntington Williams, Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. Charles Gardner, Washington, D. C.; Alanson J. Abbe, Winter Park; Walter P. Corbett, Florida; Mrs. D. R. Dunham, St. Augustine; W. C. Springer, Belleville, Ontario; Marcus W. Hill, St. Augustine; \*David R. Dunham, St. Augustine; \*Albert Shaw, New York; Mr. and Mrs. E. Carles, Jacksonville; Roger Shaw, New York; \*Mrs. Rex Greene Todd, Ocala; \*Mrs. S. T. Sisstrunk, Ocala; \*Miss Louise Gamsby, Ocala; \*Mrs. Roy V. Ott, Ocala; Brazilian Consul: Mrs. Moretzshon, Florida; Mrs. Pryor Fulton, Waltham, Mass.; Jessie L. Jones, Orlando; Florence N. Jones, Orlando; Jesus Navascus, Tafalla, Spain; \*Rev. Jas. G. Glass, Ormond Beach; H. Lynip, Rollins College; L. Worcester, Winter Park; Maud W. Makemson, Rollins College; Mrs. E. G. Kennedy, Sioux Falls, S. D.; E. H. Hollister, Sioux Falls, S. D.; Mrs. Charles Abbott, N. H.; Mrs. C. S. Ward, N. J.; \*Clara Burton, Orlando; Mrs. C. Wyman Lawrence, Tampa; Margaret R. Austin, Winter Park; March L. Leonard, Winter Park; Mrs. Robert K. Matlock, Philadelphia, Pa.; Mrs. E. W. Gage, Winter Park; Albert C. Valdes, Rollins, Tampa; \*Hamilton Holt, Rollins; J. Curtis Laing, Rollins; Robert D. Timpson, Rollins, Winter Park; Helen C. Griffiths, Honolulu, T. H.; Ernest W. Cason, Winter Park; \*Mrs. T. Frederick Davis, Jacksonville; Mrs. A. B. Tucker, Jacksonville; Mrs. L.