

Florida Historical Quarterly

Volume 27
Number 4 *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 27,
Issue 4

Article 8

1948

Local History

Florida Historical Society
membership@myfloridahistory.org



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Book Review 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

Society, Florida Historical (1948) "Local History," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 27: No. 4, Article 8.
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol27/iss4/8>

LOCAL HISTORY

Local history must depend in part on tradition. Usually tradition has a basis in fact, but has grown or changed with every retelling. Yet often it was born through a supposition only, or from unintentional error in stating a fact. Yet again, many times, its beginning was pure invention, as in the case of the numerous historical trees— few of which ever had any connection with the event they are coupled with.

Though the careful historian never states a fact of the past without some kind of written evidence, a local historian must record the most important and most likely traditions of his locality.

THE STORY OF FORT MYERS

Karl H. Grismer has recently published another of his histories of Florida West Coast cities— *The Story of Fort Myers*. (348 p. illustrated. St. Petersburg Printing Company, 1949.) In 1924 he published his *History of St. Petersburg*; since when he has published *The Story of Sarasota*, and a revised and enlarged *Story of St. Petersburg*. He has now begun work on a history of Hillsborough county.

Mr. Grismer is evidently in accord with what is said above, for he is careful to make a distinction in each case between tradition and his statements from recorded evidence. After diligent research he has put together with skill all that is known and available of the early history of Fort Myers.

Pensacola has many traditions, which is to be expected, for numerous descendants of its early Spanish and French inhabitants are still there today. Court house records and other documentary evidence authenticate many of its legends, belief in others seems to be fully warranted, some appear to be more than likely, other entertaining tales can readily be swallowed with a grain of salt; but certain of them can be disproved with little

effort, and a few are clearly the inventions of a good story-teller.

Celia Myrover Robinson, an old resident, has gathered the most interesting of these into two recent publications: *Where Romance Flowered, Stories of Old Pensacola*; and *The Crown Jewel, Fabulous Families of Old Pensacola*. The fictional embellishment is here and there admitted by the author; but the greater part are facts, though in some cases it is left for the reader to guess into which of the above categories the legend should be placed.

THE EARLY SOUTHWEST COAST

Florida's Vanishing Era, recently published, has the subtitle "From the Journals of a Young Girl and Her Father 1887-1910." These are Charles A. Dean and Eleanor H. Dean Pearse, who came to the West Coast each winter for these twenty-three years.

The seventy-five pages of text comes directly from their diaries and letters home which pleasingly take you back to the time and the place, and hence are of greater interest and value than reminiscences could be. But of even greater interest are nearly two hundred reproductions of photographs of whatever attracted their attention and interest, especially during the early years. While largely of the Punta Gorda-Fort Myers region, there are a few of the coast from Tampa to Key West. Here are good pictures of the early steamers, the Hamilton Disston of 1891 and many others, of all of the hotels from 1889 on, of street scenes, the principal characters of that era, phosphate shipping from Boca Grande in 1893, cowpunchers driving cattle across the Caloosahatchee, and fishing and hunting.

EARLY ORLANDO

Mr. E. H. Gore, a resident of Orlando for forty-five years, has been gathering the facts and traditions of its early period. The result, now published, is *From Florida Sand to the City Beautiful*. "A Historical Record of Orlando, Florida." (142 p. \$1.25).

Seemingly every activity in the building of the city and in the community life of its people is recorded in detail with names and dates, so the volume contains a mass of several thousand facts seldom similarly brought together in one place. There are fifty reproductions of photographs, mainly of Orlando streets and buildings from near its beginning, an especially interesting feature of the volume.

They All Call it Tropical is the title of a booklet of 77 pages by Charles M. Brookfield and Oliver Griswold. (Data Press, Coconut Grove. \$1.00). The sub-title describes it as: True Tales of the Romantic Everglades National Park, Cape Sable, and the Florida Keys. The Foreword is by Daniel B. Beard, Superintendent, Everglades National Park, and there is an Introduction by John. D. Pennekamp, of the Everglades National Park Commission. There are 23 suitable illustrations.

In Memory of Major Dade

The Colonel William Carroll Lee Chapter (Miami), National Society, United States Daughters of 1812, unveiled a marker at the Dade County Court House on March 11 honoring Major Francis Langhorne Dade.

This is a part of a project of the Daughters of 1812 to place a marker in every county of the United States which is named for an 1812 patriot.