

1949

"Tequesta 1949, Annual of the Historical Association of Southern Florida"

Florida Historical Society
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TEQUESTA, 1949

The 1949 issue of *Tequesta*, the annual of the Historical Association of Southern Florida, which appeared while the last number of this QUARTERLY was in press, is the ninth of the series; and, as usual, contains a number of interesting historical articles relating to that region. Most of the papers were read at the program meetings of the Association and at the annual meeting of the Florida Historical Society last year when we were guests of that organization. The publication of these papers, year by year, makes a permanent addition to the recorded history of South Florida; a history which, largely through the influence and efforts of the Association, is thus steadily being written.

Dr. Charlton W. Tebeau, of the University of Miami and president of the Florida Historical Society, has been editor of *Tequesta* since 1946. As a long-time teacher of history and head of that department of the University, the historical worth of what he includes in the periodical is assured.

Five interesting articles comprise the issue:

Cape Florida Lighthouse

Charles M. Brookfield, who with Oliver Griswold recently published *They All Call it Tropical*, reviewed in our April issue of last year, tells of the earliest surviving landmark of the coast, the Cape Florida lighthouse, completed in 1825. The sight of the old brick tower now, long since abandoned, which for half a century warned vessels off the dangerous coast, raises the query: how many hundreds of them would have been lost without its friendly beam through the darkness or its black-capped white outline by day.

The most notable event of its history was an attack by the Indians in 1836 when one of its two occupants was killed and the other badly wounded and miraculously escaped. The tower was gutted, and it was not until 1846 that it was rebuilt and in operation again. In 1855 the light was raised to ninety-five feet. Destroyed again in 1861, it was dark until 1867, and was abandoned in 1878.

A half-tone reproduction of a photograph of the tower, which is still standing, shows how it appears today. The article is one of those read at our last annual meeting.

A Dash Through the Everglades

In 1892 James E. Ingraham led an expedition which has become legendary across the Everglades from Fort Myers to the Miami river, instigated and supported by Henry B. Plant. We can only surmise what Plant had in mind. The "Journal" of the party was published in the 1947 issue of *Tequesta*, edited with notes by Watt P. Marchman. Another account of the expedition, written by Alonzo Church who accompanied Ingraham was recorded later and copies of the manuscript given to a few libraries. The publication of the "Journal" aroused so much interest that Dr. Tebeau has included the Church narrative in this issue of *Tequesta*. There is an "Introduction" by Mr. Marchman, with a brief account of Mr. Church.

Recollections of Early Miami

Reminiscences of the early settlers always make good reading in addition to their historical value, and J. K. Dorn, who came to Miami more than half a century ago, had the opportunity of knowing the few who had come earlier. His narrative is a series of incidents and facts which are often more interesting than a connected history.

William Selby Harney: Indian Fighter

Very few names, other than Osceola, came out of the Seminole War with any acclaim, but Colonel Harney's has become legendary. He was a real fighter in the United States Army for more than forty years, and much of his fame, at least for us, was won in Florida. Oliver Griswold, in this paper which was read at the annual meeting of the Florida Historical Society in Miami last year, gives us a brief sketch of his whole career. He came to Florida with General Jackson, then

served against the Indians in the Northwest Territory; where, Mr. Griswold tells us, he formed a warm friendship with Jefferson Davis, then a second lieutenant. He was in the thick of the Black Hawk War, where his intimate comrade was Abraham Lincoln. He took an active part in the Seminole War, both in the fighting and the endless negotiation. In Florida, Harney is remembered most for the ambush on the Caloosahatchie, and the crossing of the Everglades. In 1840 he and his command were the first white men to cross the lower glades. He fought through the Mexican War, then conquered the Sioux, those war-like Indians of the plains. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was seized by the Confederates on his way to Washington and taken to Richmond, where he refused to join the Confederacy, and was released.

Early Pioneers of South Florida

Henry J. Wagner was born in Miami in 1871; his grandfather had come to the region in 1855, so what he has recorded in his recollections goes back to the very beginning of the settlement of the Miami region. Only a portion of the narrative which he left has been printed heretofore. The entire manuscript, from the files of the Association, is published here. There are twelve pages of his interesting story, most of which is nowhere else.

The Association

A roster of the officials of the Association and all members : Founding, Charter, Sustaining, and Annual is included; with the treasurer's report for the past fiscal year. There are 419 members, a remarkable number for a regional historical society.