

1952

Book Reviews

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 (1952) "Book Reviews," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 31 : No. 1 , Article 7.
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol31/iss1/7>

BOOK REVIEWS

The Florida of the Inca, by Garcilaso de la Vega, el Inca. Translated and edited by John Grier Varner and Jeanette Johnson Varner. (1951, University of Texas Press, Austin, XLV and 655 pages. \$7.50.)

The Inca Garcilaso's history of Florida, primarily on account of the De Soto expedition, first appeared in print at Lisbon in 1605. A reprint with emendations was published in Madrid in 1723, and is the best known of the several re-issues. There are translations in several languages. This version is offered as the only complete rendition in English from the original Spanish. It is, therefore, the full and true Garcilaso. The translation has been generally approved in the reviews in professional journals.

The translators and editors have provided an excellent introduction in which they describe and discuss the sources on which the account of the De Soto expedition is based, together with pertinent biographical data on the author. Supplementary data is supplied in footnotes. This added information is to illuminate rather than to correct or criticize the Inca's version of the story. Earlier accounts by Ranjel, Biedma and Elvas and the report of the De Soto Expedition Commission supply the material for the limited number of footnotes.

The author is as interesting as is his history. He was the son of a Peruvian Indian princess of the last of the Inca ruling families and what the editors call a "second" conquistador. He demonstrates in his writing intense admiration for the ability, courage and achievements of both the Spaniards and the Indians. The titanic struggle between the two in Florida which he describes serves to display the qualities which he admires in both. Even with their horses and armor the Spaniards barely manage to emerge alive, but they do, to the glory of both the conquered and the conqueror.

He apparently wrote with the purpose to stimulate further

interest in the conquest of Florida which, incidentally, means the whole of the North American continent. He refuses to be discouraged by the results of the De Soto effort. Speaking of the failure to find gold and silver he argues: "there is no reason to doubt that Florida may have these metals, and that if sought for, mines will be found, as each day they are being found in Mexico and Peru. But should they not be found, it would suffice to establish an empire of such long and wide lands and of such fertile and abundant provinces as we have seen and will see, not only because of what the earth already yields but also because of the fruits, vegetables, grain and livestock that could be brought there from Spain and Mexico. And there is no reason to doubt that for planting and cattle raising, better lands cannot be desired, and that with the riches of pearls already found . . ." give unlimited promise of wealth. He is no less moved by the possibility of winning the Indian to Christianity. He is, in truth, a true product of the Conquering and crusading spirit of sixteenth century Spain.

In fact the greatest value of the account is in the picture de reader gets of the spirit and temper of the age. There is much of the romantic in it, but it does show clearly de widespread interest in the De Soto expedition and the hopes of new wealth inspired by Spanish successes in Mexico and Peru, particularly since De Soto and others in the expedition had already participated in some of the others. It also clearly depicts the crusading religious zeal so inseparable from Spanish imperial and economic interests.

Garcilaso's Florida is a magnificent story replete with deeds of valor, achievement, frustration and eventual failure. One will look in vain for any conclusive clues as to where De Soto's march began and what route it follows. The author disclaims any intention to provide such data. It is an interesting and highly readable mixture of historical fact, folklore, and inspirational

interpretation written a half century after the events described. Here, for example, is the account of Juan Ortiz and the Florida version of the Pocahontas story. This piece of literature has in it many of the elements for a best seller. It is to be hoped that it can be made available in a popular priced edition. The University of Texas Press is to be commended for this service to our history.

CHARLTON W. TEBEAU

University of Miami

A Survey of Indian River Archaeology, Florida. Irving Rouse (296 pp., 8 pls., 15 figs., 5 tables). Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 44, New Haven, 1951.

Chronology at South Indian Field, Florida. Vera Masius Ferguson (62 pp., 4 pls., 10 figs., 7 tables). Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No. 45, New Haven, 1951. (\$4., the two)

Subsequent to World War II there has been a steady growth of interest in the Prehistory of Florida. The State of Florida through its office of State Archaeologist, the University of Florida and the Florida State University through their departments of anthropology, and many individuals and organizations have thus lately recognized the urgent need for scientifically controlled recovery of Florida's anthropological heritage. A direct outgrowth of this inquiry has been a steadily expanding bibliography covering the many aspects of Florida's past before colonization, and one of the prize contributions to this assemblage has been the excellent work of Rouse covered by this review.

Many consider the present publication by Rouse (and the accompanying work by Ferguson) as a very definite "must" for the historian as well as the anthropologist. Rouse, very properly, has acknowledged the possibility that his full reading audience might not be fully informed in the current knowledge of Florida

Prehistory; therefore, in a space of 71 pages, he has reviewed his area of study in such a way as to bring his prime objective into sharp focus. Indeed, the purpose of the report is to record the findings at the midden site of South Indian Field near Malabar, Florida, and survey the adjacent cultural area; nevertheless, he introduces the reader to the geography of the region, its geologic past, the general reconstruction of aboriginal life in the Indian River area (based on historical sources) and the sequence of historical events of the region. Also, before embarking on a description of the findings at South Indian Field, Rouse reviews the history of previous archaeological investigations in the general Indian River-Saint Johns River headwaters area. It seems that ever since the Bartrams came up the Saint Johns in 1766 the burial mounds, middens, and village sites of past Indian inhabitants have proven a challenge to those who have wished to reveal the past.

The purpose of the investigations at South Indian Field and the Indian River region was "(1) to determine the cultural content of the ceramic sequence; (2) to correlate the resulting cultural sequence with the series of geologic intervals; and (3) to determine its relationship to the historic periods." The detailed recording of excavation findings reported by both Rouse and Ferguson indicated that only three of the seven known cultural periods of the Indian River region were revealed at South Indian Field. Also, in connection with the problem of geologic correlation, two of the South Indian Field cultural horizons were shown to be comparable with two well defined geologic time periods. As to the historic relationships, the site offered little evidence of occupation in more recent times. Thus, with these local gaps, a site survey of the surrounding cultural area was imperative in order to gain a full interpretation of the original three-phase problem.

The reader who is unfamiliar with archaeological technique

will find the section concerning "Survey of Sites" most illuminating, both as to approach to the problem and the resultant data. Information from 65 sites was used by Rouse in the reconstruction of the cultural and temporal aspects of Indian life in this eastern-central portion of peninsular Florida and as an adjunct to the findings at South Indian Field. The section of the report dealing with general conclusions presents evidence indicating human occupation in the Indian River section as far back as 2,000 B.C. From that period upward there is a continual line of cultural horizons culminating in the Indian tribal group known to the first white settlers as the Ais. With the passing of this tribe, the ethnic record appears to have been taken over by the Seminole invaders.

In summary, Rouse offers numerous thought provoking suggestions in addition to his general conclusions. For example, he offers the suggestion that the Ciboney people of early Cuba were derived from the Preceramic tribes of Florida. These and numerous other problems continue to face the person who reconstructs history before it was written.

FREDERICK W. SLEIGHT

Rollins College

History of Jackson County, by J. Randall Stanley. (n.p.: Jackson County Historical Society, 1950. pp. viii, 281. Illustrations.)

As the first governor of the Territory of Florida, Andrew Jackson ordered the division of the newly acquired area, in 1821, into the counties of St. Johns comprising all of the lands east of the Suwannee River, and Escambia those west of the river. At the first session of the Legislative Council, in 1822, Jackson County was created stretching westward from the Apalachicola River and Duval was carved from St. Johns. It was a natural consequence that one of these counties should bear the name of the Tennessean who had plunged into Florida in 1814 and 1818, and had come again in 1821.

The history of the area of Jackson County, however, begins in the prehistoric years of the continent when the "Marianna Lowlands" was a flourishing area supporting many villages of aboriginal Americans. The limestone foundation of the region, like so much of Florida, is the underlying reason for the low hills and shallow hollows of the topography. The limestone is likewise responsible for the fertile soils which have ever supported a vigorous aboriginal and American agricultural population.

Because of its propinquity to the older settlements of Georgia, Alabama, and other southern states, the fertile lands of Jackson County were among the first settled after 1821. There are many contemporary descriptions of the pioneer who came to the region and felled trees for log cabins and planted cotton and corn in the clearings. Long before 1845, when Florida became a state, Jackson County was but a replica of the plantation economy of the lower South, with the same framework of society and politics.

By the time of secession, in 1861, Jackson was the second leading plantation county of Florida: a population of 5,306 whites and 4,903 Negro slaves. In line with the dominant plantation economy of the South, the Jackson County planters were Whigs who promoted the second bank of the Territory, sought admission to the Union as a state, and endorsed the Constitution of 1838. When the Secession Convention was called in 1861, Jackson County voters selected a delegation of Constitutional Unionists with orders to oppose any quick withdrawal from the United States. Only one of the Jackson County delegates, however, was among the seven who voted against secession, although two other delegates from the county openly apologized for approving the secession movement.

Though the majority were apparently against immediate secession, the people of Jackson County rallied to the support of

the Southern Confederacy under the leadership of their fellow resident, Governor John Milton and their hearty support continued throughout the war. In the Reconstruction period much of the unrest of the "restored state" occurred in and around Marianna, the county seat. With the restoration of "Conservative Democracy" in 1876, Jackson County again became a leading county of the State. "King Cotton" ruled the economic scene until 1917 when the infamous boll weevil had virtually wiped out the crop. In place of cotton fields, the planters turned to peanut fields and by 1947 some fifty thousand acres planted to peanuts produced a crop of thirty-four million pounds, a yield which placed Jackson County among the leaders of the United States in this field.

This county history is a volume filled with detail of the political, economic, and social life of the various periods. Material on the towns and communities has come from letters, papers, newspapers, and the civil records of the county. Some typographical errors have slipped into the volume and a listing of the sources used would have added to the value of the book.

It is indeed pleasant to review this history of a Florida county. A former president of the United States was quoted as saying that: "Local history is the ultimate substance of national history. The history of a nation is only the history of its villages written large." Too little praise comes to the serious writer of local history, for though his work is necessarily limited in area, such history is personal, informative, and interesting, and touches the lives of individuals much more intimately than the annals of the state and nation. It is to be hoped this volume will encourage others to work on similar treatments of many other Florida counties and towns.

J. E. DOVELL

The University of Florida

Florida's Early Industrial Development: 1850-1890

The above is another of the studies of Florida's economic development issued by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida. The authors are John N. Webb and Paul A. Fenlon of the College of Business Administration. Copies will be sent to residents of Florida on request.

Florida's Population

Any Florida resident interested may obtain on request a copy of *Florida's Population, 1920-1950. The Urban Trend and Political Representation* (12p.) by John M. Maclachlan, issued by Public Administration Clearing Service, University of Florida.

The Papers of Henry Clay

The Department of History of the University of Kentucky, in cooperation with the National Historical Publications Commission, is compiling for publication the papers of Henry Clay. For such an important project it is very desirable that all letters to and from Clay be located; also, especially, all significant contemporaneous references should be brought to light and studied. Our readers are requested to keep this in mind and cooperate when possible. Address: James F. Hopkins, Department of History, University of Kentucky, Lexington.