

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. 4 , Article 10.
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol31/iss4/10>

Benjamin Hawkins, Indian Agent, by Merritt B. Pound. (University of Georgia Press, Athens, 1951. 270 pages, fronts. \$4.00)

Benjamin Hawkins played a number of important roles in Southern history. A member of the Continental Congress and later a United States Senator, he ably represented his native state of North Carolina. He served on several important committees and was close to many major political figures of the time.

Hawkins's name, though, is most commonly associated with the Southern Indians, especially the Creeks and Cherokees. His first major contact with these was his appointment as a United States Commissioner for Indian Affairs for the Southern Department in 1785. This Commission was faced with factors developing out of American frontier expansion clashing with growing Indian power which was supported by the Spanish and English. In fact, this was the basic problem Hawkins dealt with in his long career with the Indians.

The major phase of Hawkins's relationship with the Indians came in 1796 when he was appointed "Principal Temporary Agent for Indian Affairs South of the Ohio River." In 1801 he received a permanent appointment which continued until his resignation in 1815.

During these nineteen years his activities ranged from boundary locating to the recovery of runaway slaves. Hawkins faced pressure from the Georgians who were anxious for Indian removal and he had to conciliate the Indians feeling the same pressure. He represented the United States to the Creek chiefs, who were being wooed by Spanish and English adventurers and officials. Throughout all he seems to have been sympathetic to the Indian and his problems but was completely unbiased and fair.

Dr. Pound's story of Hawkins is a scholarly account based on broad and thorough research. Historians will be indebted to

him for this valuable contribution. The general reader, though, will never grasp the complete personality and character of Hawkins from this book.

Thorough and adequate as this book is, it nevertheless misses greater stature by the narrowness of its approach. More essential background material would have helped the reader place Hawkins in the wider picture of the time. Nowhere is there a brief statement of Creek Indian life, nor are Bowles's machinations recounted. The struggle between the Spanish and others in Northeastern Florida is hardly touched, yet it was important in upsetting Indian equilibrium. In fact, the great international significance of the Creeks during Hawkins's period is never adequately brought out.

A more technical criticism, perhaps, is Pounds Indian tribal nomenclature. To a great extent he tends to use Hawkins's own rendition of Indian names. Since that time a great variety of phonetic spellings have lost favor, including many of those used in Florida. How many Floridians, for example, would recognize the Seminole town of Aulotchewau as Alachua?

Despite these minor criticisms, primarily quantitative, the book is important as the first full-length biography of Hawkins. An extensive bibliography and thorough index make the book very usable.

JOHN M. GOGGIN

University of Florida

E. C. May: *Gaters, Skeeters, & Malary. Recollections of a Pioneer Florida Judge*. New York, Vantage Press, 1953. (220 pp. \$3.50)

Judge E. C. May of Inverness came to Florida in his youth, seeking adventure as well as a livelihood. Since 1892 he has lived in Citrus County and been a part of many of the varied activities of that region - as merchant, lawyer, State Attorney,

member of the Florida House of Representatives, and County Judge until his retirement in 1949.

The volume is largely reminiscent and autobiographical, told as a series of incidents; but some of the stories are records of what others have told him who were participants in the events narrated. There is much for those who wish to know of Florida pioneer life of the region and the period, as well as brief lively tales of a multitude of happenings both common and unusual.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN FLORIDA

L. M. Bristol: *Three Focal Points in the Development of Florida's State System of Higher Education*. Gainesville, Florida. Pvt. ptd., 1952. University of Florida Bookstore. (140 pp. \$2.50)

After exhaustive research in all available official records and other documents, Dr. L. M. Bristol, Professor of Sociology, Emeritus, University of Florida, has written and published in mimeograph form a thorough clarification of the establishment and growth of higher education in Florida. The text is supplemented by the inclusion of the most important of the documents, by notes, and by an index.

Mr. R. R. Otis of Jacksonville (1855 Ingleside Avenue) has published in mimeograph the first two sections of a projected series in which he will tell of what "the Southern States have done towards the establishment of the United States." These are: *The First Settlement of the United States by Catholic Spain* (53 pp.) and *The French Intrusion into Spain's La Florida* (28 pp.).