

# Florida Historical Quarterly

---

Volume 40  
Number 4 *Florida Historical Quarterly*, Vol 40,  
*Issue 4*

Article 7

---

1961

## 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](mailto:STARS@ucf.edu).

---

### Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (1961) "Book Reviews," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 40: No. 4, Article 7.  
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol40/iss4/7>

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Vicente Manuel de Zespedes and the Restoration of Spanish Rule in East Florida, 1784-1790.* By Helen Hornbeck Tanner. (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan [Doctoral Dissertation], 1961. 365 pp.)

*The British Meet the Seminoles; Negotiations between British Authorities in East Florida and the Indians: 1763-68.* Collected and annotated by James W. Covington. Contributions of the Florida State Museum, Social Sciences, Number 7. (Gainesville, University of Florida, 1961. 66 pp. Map, facsimile, notes, and references. \$1.00.)

THERE IS STILL so much to do in Florida history, especially in the pre-American periods (also in very recent Florida history). Naturally this does not mean that we should rejoice indiscriminately about publications dealing with these periods. They must be based on genuine documentation in order to further the true recreation of Florida's past. They also must be readable. The two publications under review are genuine contributions and are based on solid documentation. Furthermore, the Tanner work is highly readable and well organized. The Covington monograph is of lesser readability and organization but of adequate documentation.

Some of the most original (but not too readable) research comes from theses and dissertations. The Tanner book is a doctoral dissertation done at the University of Michigan, mostly based on sources from the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History at the University of Florida. Thanks to the modernization of thesis writing at Michigan the dissertation, instead of being typed, is now multilithed and therefore can be made available to a larger audience. The Tanner work unquestionably and without reservation merits this enlarged readership. It is a top work. Mrs. Tanner, under no pressure of any deadline, has spent many years preparing, writing, and polishing the work. She was guided by a master in the profession, Dr. Irving Leonard. The result of all this is a finished work of good documentation, good style, good organization, sketching important events interspersed with lighter episodes, providing serious thoughts and good humor.

The Tanner work does exactly what the title implies. This in itself is most commendable. The title is not misleading and the reader is not disappointed after he has read the study. The work contains fourteen chapters with the following titles: "The Appointment" [of Zespedes]; "Arriving in East Florida;" "Some Problems of Coexistence" [with the English and outlaws]; "A Year's Major Events" [of delightfully sketched St. Augustine happenings of 1785]; "Romantic Springtime, 1785" [problems of love that even involved the Governor's daughter who eloped]; "Spaniards, Indians and Scotsmen;" "Bare Subsistence" [discussing the standard of living]; "The Grand Tour" [through Florida with Governor Zespedes in 1786-1787]; "Future Florida: A Vision" [of Zespedes as a result of his "Grand Tour"]; "Threats from the Turbulent Frontier" [of the budding United States]; "Fray Cyril de Barcelona's Visit" [of 1788-1789 "to investigate the religious life of the province"]; "Military Reform and Intruders" [such as William Augustus Bowles]; "Fiesta in St. Augustine" [celebrating the coronation of Charles IV of Spain in 1789 (This chapter was published in the *Florida Historical Quarterly* XXXVIII (April, 1960), 280-293)]; "The End of Zespedes' Regime" [in 1790]. The bibliography following the text is good and inclusive. In sum, the Tanner study merits praise. Its pseudo-publication by the muhilit method is not enough. It should receive letter-press publication.

The Covington brochure is far smaller and covers topics that occurred during the English period (1763-1783) which directly preceded the Zespedes administration. The English period is fruitful for research; documentation is available. We need some good monographs of these twenty years of rule to complement the few good books already written. Therefore, using the too often printed cliché of reviewers, this is a welcome booklet. It contains a seventeen-page introduction; yet in a most unconventional manner the introduction, from page 5 on, is a transcript of three documents. Pages 18 to 41 contains documents dealing with the Picolata Congress of 1765 between the English and the Indians. And the third section, pages 42 to 59, contains more documents about the second Picolata Indian Conference of 1767. There are fifty-five footnotes and a modest - too modest - bibliography. The documents, according to the author, were unpublish-

ed papers taken from the Public Record Office in London (Colonial Office Papers 5-540: 36-42).

It is good to have these documents easily available in a handsome publication. There is some doubt in my mind that all of them are unpublished. For example, the real estate map on pages 30-31 is available in its original form in the *Crown Collection of Maps of North America, Series III: North American Colonies: Florida*. (Furthermore, the bibliography does not have the Lockey and Siebert tomes; and there is no reference to the thorough study of Professor Charles Fairbanks of Florida State University sketching the emergence of the Seminoles.) The main criticism of the Covington brochure-and which stands so in contrast to the Tanner book-is the lack of a unified and smooth narrative. For example, in the introduction Covington presents us with a most fascinating discovery: the Robertson Report of Florida of 1763. But who is Robertson? Covington does not tell us. Furthermore, what relationship does the report have to the Picolata Conference and why is the report in the introduction? Another example of this disjointed presentation is the author's failure to relate the first Picolata Conference to the second one.

But these shortcomings are balanced by the merits. The documents are interesting, valuable, and full of useful data. The transcription is excellent. The printing is first rate. The booklet should be acquired and read. It is available from the Florida State Museum in Gainesville. A word of praise must go to the Museum, especially to Professor Ripley P. Bullen its dynamic Curator of Social Sciences, for sponsoring this monograph series.

One afterthought might be permissible. The Tanner study was written from original documentation, all available in the United States, such as the various collections (Lockey, Stetson, etc.) at the P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History in Gainesville, the rich East Florida Papers collection at the Library of Congress, and others. The Covington source comes directly from its original place in England although almost all of the Colonial Office Papers can be obtained in the United States at Gainesville, at St. Augustine (library of the St. Augustine Historical Society), and in Washington.

We have in the United States, especially in Florida, a storehouse of documentation of the non-American periods of Florida history. It has taken years to gather. Yet there is a tendency (as

evidenced in the various quadricentennial festivities, and the St. Augustine restoration project) to rush off to Europe in search of these documents. This difficult and time-consuming task (delightful as may be a European junket) has already been done by past scholars of excellent preparation and repute. Basic and conscientious Florida research must be done by the researcher who knows archival Florida bibliography and who knows how to control his zest for a European trip if research is his main goal. After a thorough knowledge of what is easily available in the United States and what has been printed, a journey to the European archives is well in order. Tanner and to a slightly lesser extent Covington have correctly followed this procedure.

In sum, the larger, pseudo-published Tanner study and the Covington brochure are the type of original studies we need.

CHARLES W. ARNADE

*University of South Florida*

*Southern Tradition and Regional Progress.* By William H. Nicholls. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960. xviii, 202 pp. Bibliography. \$5.00.)

DR. NICHOLLS, a professor at Vanderbilt University and President of the Southern Economic Association, defines economic progress as "an increase in per capita real income." The only satisfactory rate of economic progress for the South, he says, is one "sufficiently high to bring the South's per capita material well-being up to a par with that of the non-South." To achieve such a rate of progress, Professor Nicholls argues that the South must continue to attract, promote, and build up industry. This follows because "far more families are trying to make a living from farming than Southern agricultural resources can possibly support at a level of living comparable with that afforded by similar non-farm occupations." Until many new, better-paying job opportunities are provided for these surplus farm workers, there can be little economic progress in the South.

But, the argument goes on, to gain financially strong, high-wage industries, the South must develop a labor force having

or capable of learning industrial skills; and it must also develop urban communities which are good places in which to live. They must have good public schools not likely to be closed down or subjected to violence. They must provide such public services as paving, sewerage, zoning, and police and fire protection. There must be an atmosphere of law and order. There must be responsible and efficient state and local governments financed by non-discriminatory taxes. Unless the South develops such communities, it cannot hope to acquire enough industry to solve its problem of rural overpopulation and poverty.

The difficulty is that the developing of urban areas attractive to industry is inhibited by the following elements of the Southern tradition: agrarianism, a rigid social structure, an undemocratic political structure, "the weakness of social responsibility on the part of the South's traditional socio-political leadership," and the "intellectually debilitating effects of the Southern tradition of conformity of thought and behavior." To each of these parts of our tradition Professor Nicholls devotes a chapter, and his contention that they tend to limit and slow down the industrialization of the South is quite convincing. He hopes that his analysis will "make Southern economists and business leaders more aware of the noneconomic barriers to Southern economic progress." I wish that all of them might read his book.

GEORGE R. BENTLEY

*University of Florida*

*The Patriot Chiefs.* By Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. (New York: The Viking Press, 1961. xiv, 364 pp. Illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. \$6.00.)

The *Patriot Chiefs* consists of a series of biographies of American Indian leaders, from the almost legendary seventeenth century Iroquois, Hiawatha, to Chief Joseph of the Nez Perces who died in 1904. In addition the author has selected for individual treatment King Philip, Pope of the Pueblos, Pontiac, Tecumseh - whom he calls "The Greatest Indian," - Osceola, Black Hawk, and Crazy Horse. One may demur at the omission

of certain other great Indian leaders - Cochise and Geronimo, for example - but doubtless they did not suit the purposes of the author.

It is probably inevitable that a biographer should show partisan leanings, especially when he is writing about the heroes and victims of a lost cause. Everyone by now is aware of the shameful duplicity of the white man in his dealings with the Indians. But Mr. Josephy is somewhat uncritical in his acceptance of the stereotype of noble redman vs. greedy, stupid, and treacherous white. With only minor exceptions his patriots are *sans reproche*, whereas his non-Indian Americans are a pretty sorry lot.

The author's research into published sources has evidently been extensive. He writes about his heroes with authority and a commendable enthusiasm which gives them the breath of life. His treatment of their white antagonists, however, is too often summary and superficial, notably his dismissal of Custer as purely contemptible. The whites were, as everyone now realizes, guilty of atrocities of an eye-for-an-eye sort, but the complexion of the dirty fighter is of no single hue. Perhaps we are meant to feel that the white man should have known better.

Mr. Josephy stresses the fact that Indian leaders at their best developed a sense of nationality, and that some of them, particularly those he writes about, were capable of looking beyond tribal rivalries to the concept of an Indian nation. In this sense, at least, they were genuine patriots. Hiawatha and the League of the Five Nations which he wanted to establish were far ahead of his time and people, and no less a civilized man than Benjamin Franklin held the League up to his fellow colonists as something for them to emulate. Tecumseh's largely futile attempts to unite the northern tribes against the white man were the aspirations of a chief whose intelligence and integrity even his white enemies respected; but the people whom he hoped to lead were not ready to give up personal power and tribal independence for an unproved concept of nationhood.

Thus it was with the other Indian patriots. With no political tradition and no sense of history their schemes of federation for collective action and survival had no chance of success. Their cause, however tenaciously fought, must inevitably be lost.

*The Patriot Chiefs* gives the reader much of this sense of inevitability, the Greek tragedy of a race. The patriots themselves

are gallant, desperate, and doomed. Mr. Josephy sees his protagonists in fine, clear perspective, and traces their rise and fall with a skillful hand. His somewhat partisan bias by no means destroys the interest and authority of his work, a book recommended to the reader who wishes to know more about those leaders of the vanquished race who so valiantly tried to hold back the advancing tides.

CLARKE OLNEY

*University of Georgia*

*The Confederacy, A Social and Political History in Documents*,  
 Edited by Albert D. Kirwan. (New York, Meridian Books,  
 1959. 292 pp. Notes, bibliography, and index. \$1.45)

This volume falls short of the scope announced in its subtitle. Actually it is a group of selected excerpts from documents joined together by a kind of running commentary supplied by the editor. Following a brief but adequate introduction the material is divided into eleven topical chapters. The material in each chapter is arranged in chronological order.

Several very good characteristics can be identified as soon as one begins an examination of this volume. First, all of the editor's comments are printed in italics. It is easy to separate the documentary parts from the editorial comments. Secondly, the materials selected do give a fairly good sampling of the "flavor of society" in the Confederacy during the war years. In an age when the American People wrote and read (more or less intelligently), instead of accepting as gospel the palavering of their "mass information" propagandists, the problem of selecting representative documents was not a small one. Here it is rather well done.

The result is a good volume that will give the casual reader with an historical bent a feeling of the contemporary opinions and complaints of the Southern citizenry. It can serve a much more useful service as a reference for public school teachers of United States history. Most teachers are so over-burdened with the so-called extra-curricular activities that they have little or no time for scholarship - the art of learning something. It will provide



those teachers who are interested an easy and inexpensive source for these materials - most of which have never seen the inside of a public school library. This should be its primary use, and as such it is excellent. All kinds of interesting classroom "materials" can be extracted from its pages. These materials might even infuse a little life into the pages of our classroom text-books.

The reviewer of a collection of documents can usually find many reasons for criticisms. When one considers the millions of documents from which to make selections, this becomes apparent. However, there are a few small faults which should be mentioned. First is the section headed "King Cotton." This should have been called "King Cotton Diplomacy" as most of the contents are concerned with the impact of cotton on the diplomatic policies of the Confederacy. The editor should have at least indicated that the influence of such "Cotton Thinking" was just as important in all other areas of Southern life, both public and private.

More excerpts should have been included to show how the economic structure of the Confederacy deteriorated almost from the first day of the struggle. Outstanding examples are not difficult to find. This reviewer would have been inclined to add some statistics - one such list was mentioned but was not included. More emphasis might have been given to the ways in which the politicians, both confederate and state, failed to provide the kind of leadership which might have lessened the importance of this enervating, paralyzing, malignant growth.

Only one other major criticism seems to be in order. The excerpts on religion (or most of them) as selected are good, and they illustrate the position of the various religious groups in the Confederacy. But the editor should have included some comment showing the much more important role played by religion and the clergy in society, in the Civil War period. Few people realize just how important the "church" and the clergy were to the daily lives of the people of the South in those trying days.

The editor did not attempt to gloss over or avoid some of the unheroic acts of some individuals, either North or South. He included information about the Northern "cotton-thieves" and the Southern "patriots" who collaborated with them. If any citizen believes that either side in this conflict was above reproach, without its fair share of grafters and speculators, or governed

only by the dictates of national welfare, honesty, and patriotism, he had best not read these documents.

The bibliography is good. Most of the excerpts were taken from printed sources that are not too difficult to obtain from a library of reasonable proportions. Those who desire to read the complete documents on any section or subject will have little difficulty in doing so. The notes and index are equally complete and adequate. The price of the paper-back edition makes this material readily available even to the poor student who is seriously trying to become educated.

THEO R. PARKER

*Freeport, Grand Bahama*

*True Tales of the South at War; How Soldiers Fought and Families Lived, 1861-1865.* Collected and edited by Clarence Poe. (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1961. 208 pp. \$2.95)

Dr. Clarence Poe, for half a century Editor of *The Progressive Farmer*, has long been a student of the history of the South and served the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association as secretary, president, and member of the executive committee. Himself "the son of a Confederate soldier-farmer who survived the War" and "named for a Confederate who did not survive," he finds among his earliest recollections tales told by Confederate soldiers about their wartime adventures, and he early began an effort to preserve the records of these war memories. Finally he called upon the 1,400,000 subscribers to his magazine for Civil War letters, diaries, and reminiscences. The result was this book which he calls "a book by Southerners themselves-about soldiers who did the doing, daring, and dying at the front, the wives and others who kept the home fires burning, the children and grandchildren who later heard the stories of the old folks."

It is indicative of the genial impartiality of the editor that he uses the name "Civil War," for his tales are not Yankee-hating ones; they admire the human qualities of wearers of the blue as well as of the wearers of the gray. Nor is this book in any

sense a "romance;" there is a good deal of the sort of thing that Bruce Bairnsfather did so well for World War I with his cartoons: Southern and Northern soldiers exchanging tobacco for food and clothing - with the result that "the Northern 'body-lice' battling the Southern 'cooties' " prevented the new owners from getting much sleep. There are also tales of heroism on the field of battle. The thrilling views of brigades drawn up for battle, and cavalry charges, mingle with the gruesome pictures of the aftermath of battle on the field and in the hospitals - with the stench of corpses and of incurable wounds. The impact of the war upon women and children appears in diaries of soldiers' wives, and there is also graphic description of the horrible lot of prisoners of war. The editor has done a skillful job of marshalling his materials. At the beginning are many brief tales of volunteering in the early days of the conflict; the last story is called "A Prodigal Soldier's Return." The tales vary in length from one paragraph bits to the forty-five page *Reminiscences of Berry Benson* containing accounts of battles such as Spotsylvania, stories of his capture while scouting within the Northern lines, his escape from Point Lookout Prison, and the final scene at Appomattox: "So B. K. and I left the little tattered, weary, sad and weeping army - *our* army - left them there on the hill with their arms stacked in the field, all in rows-never to see it any more."

Dr. Poe's book is not to be mistaken for a carefully documented history of the Civil War or even of any part of it; it is rather a mirror reflecting the somewhat time-mellowed feelings about the war of those who had a part in it.

ROBERT S. WARD

*University of Miami*