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***The Florida Adventures of Kirk Monroe* edited by Irving A. Leonard**

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Tocobaga control extended as far south as Charlotte Harbor, and Bullen is forced to cite the not too reliable DeSoto accounts to prove other points. Still, Bullen presents us with the best account of Tocobaga. Milanich's "The Western Timucua" is a solid work by a specialist in the field. Likewise, Deagan's "Cultures in Transition: Fusion and Assimilation among the Eastern Timucua" is written by an active researcher in Timucuan culture. Larson, who has done extensive archaeological work in Georgia, has written a good account of the Guale Indians and the Spanish missions. Sturtevant, an authority on the Calusas and Seminoles, examines the disappearance of the last of the original Florida Indians by "exploiting" the details of the report made by a Jesuit mission to Florida in 1743. A copy of the report made by Father Alane published in Spanish is attached to the short article. Fairbank examines the Seminole background in "Ethno-archaeology of the Florida Seminole." It is a good résumé of his past research. The collection of articles is concluded with Proctor's "Taping the Indian Past: The University of Florida's Oral History Project." It is a survey of what the University of Florida has done with funds provided by the Doris Duke Oral History Project.

To some buffs of the history of Tampa Bay, there is information given within the various papers that is not exactly correct. DeSoto probably landed at Tampa Bay, but his chances of landing near Fort Myers are remote. There is no reliable proof that Robert Ambrister established a trading post in the Tampa Bay area. Altogether the collection of papers and articles is a must for those who assemble important books concerning Florida history.

James W. Covington

The Florida Adventures of Kirk Monroe. Edited by Irving A. Leonard. (Chuluota, Florida: Mickler House Publishers, 1975. 218 pp. \$11.75)

The life of adventurer, explorer, and author Kirk Monroe, at least up to age sixty in 1910 (he died in 1930), was remarkable, exciting and altogether pleasant. This writer of innumerable boys' books and articles for both young people and adults, based on his personal experiences from the post Civil War period to the early twentieth century, lived almost completely in accord with his own interests and desires.

Irving A. Leonard, the editor of this anthology, first depicts Monroe's early years in the raw and remote wild west of the Dakotas, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and other states. But it is the south Florida area, where Kirk Monroe made his permanent home, and where he experienced most of his adventurous treks, both on water and over land, that supplies the locale for most of the sketches in this volume. It is difficult for the south Florida reader of this volume to realize that barely one hundred years ago this area was remote, placid and inhabited by numerous Indian tribes. Yet such indeed was the case.

Monroe's description of Tampa in "A Gulf Coast City," written in 1882, is especially intriguing for today's resident of the Tampa Bay area. According to Monroe:

Tampa once reached is found to be a sleepy, shabby Southern town, with wide streets innocent of other pavement than that offered by the deep, loose, white sand of the country, wooden sidewalks, wooden houses and stores, some of which are painted and as many only tinted a delicate gray by the action of the weather, and seven or eight hundred inhabitants

Monroe further pointed out that Tampa at the time had sandy streets with "no rattle of vehicles" but did have two small hotels and several small boarding houses. It also had two churches, one Methodist and one Roman Catholic; also, a rope ferry across the Hillsborough River and one stone house.

Monroe spoke of fruits that were grown in the Tampa area in early 1882, including oranges, lemons, limes, citron, guavas, the avocado or alligator pear and sugar apples. He pointed out that the average temperature of the west coast of Florida is "milder and more equable than that of the east." He foresaw that when Tampa's railroad and a first class hotel were completed, "there will be no more charming nor popular place on the west coast in which to pass the winter months" than Tampa.

Kirk Monroe was particularly fascinated by the Seminoles; he loved the children and was one of the few white men of the time whom the Indians trusted implicitly. He referred to Florida Seminoles as "as fine a specimen of American Indian as can be found." His black hair "is clipped as short as possible but for at the top of the head, where it grows to full length." The author pointed out that the Indians' great fear was that they would be removed to the Indian territory. This fear made them shy of all white men, especially of those whom they suspected of being connected with the government. But Monroe says that at the time Florida Indians were peaceful, industrious and self supporting, that civilization had already influenced them, and that they were now living more and more like the white man. He strongly hoped that the government would recognize these Indians as people possessing human rights so that in some measure the "Century of Dishonor" would be ended.

Other topics depicted by Kirk Monroe include "Shad-Fishing in Florida," "Pineapple of the Florida Keys," "Cruising in Florida Waters," "Tarpon Days," and "Adventures with Alligators." Most are of interest to today's reader if only because of their colorful descriptions of how radically one century can change the life and physical appearance of a state like Florida.

Yet while intriguing and colorful in many instances, the sketches are not brilliant; they hardly compare with the writings of a Mark Twain or Thomas Wolfe. It is well that Irving A. Leonard has reprinted these adventures of a long forgotten writer. They are authentic and well worth reading. Monroe's writings should be read and appreciated, but they are not great literary works. They are most useful to people of Florida who have an interest in life as it was in this state a century ago. Their attraction for other readers may be limited, however.

A bibliography of Kirk Monroe's books and articles is to be found in the volume's final pages. The number of his writings is impressive indeed - over forty books and innumerable articles. Most are forgotten today, and it is not likely that the present day young people will be reading many of these. Still, Monroe's writings will make a contribution to those who care to know Florida in its earlier days.

Chester Handleman

History of Fort Myers Beach, Florida. By Rolfe F. Schell. (Fort Myers Beach: Island Press, 1980, 96 pp. \$3.95.)

A more apt title for this paperback, written by long-time Florida resident, Rolfe F. Schell, would have been "A Chronology of Fort Myers Beach" for that's what it amounts to - not a history. In concise, chronological order, he traces the development of the popular beach (located on historic Estero Island about 15 miles southwest of Fort Myers) from prehistoric times to its present-day hustle.

The most interesting part of the 96-page book involves the Spanish explorations of the area surrounding Estero Island in the 1500s when the extinct Caloosas were the dominant Indians in Southwest Florida. This theme is dear to Schell's heart, whose book, *De Soto Didn't Land at Tampa* claims the conquistador landed at the nearby mouth of the Caloosahatchee River (in Lee County) instead of at Tampa Bay.

For readers inquiring about names, dates and places, this book can be a handy reference. It describes the original homesteads and their present occupants. Although Southwest Florida was settled much later than other sections of the state, it's hard to believe that Estero Island was still being homesteaded as late as 1914. In reviewing the settlement of the beach from the giddy days of the Florida boom to today, Schell tells where and when many of the now-landmark structures were built and how they changed hands through the years.

Schell writes of the background of events, businesses and civic groups from scanning area newspaper microfilms, interviews with old-timers and his own remembrances. But, while he writes from his years of intimate knowledge of Fort Myers Beach, he deliberately leaves out such doings as murders, bootleg and all-night beach parties and wild goings-on once part of the island's colorful history.

Schell's reportorial style lacks the dash of the late Florence Fritz whose out-of-print book, *Unknown Florida*, describes in some detail the early beginnings of Fort Myers Beach. The book also shows signs of publishing in haste, as exemplified by sloppy writing and careless editing.

It contains irksome, if minor, misspellings, such as Charleston for Carlstrom Field in Arcadia, typographical errors, especially in the names of persons, and misstatements of