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***Vicente Folch, Governor in Spanish Florida, 1787-1811* by David Hart White**

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objectivity – the author is a native Miamian who bubbles over like a chamber of commerce president about the glories of life in "her" metropolis.

If there is little real analysis in the text, it is the almost inevitable result of the book's being an example of the coffee-table picture-book genre. And it is rare for an individual to write a history of a city and concentrate on its bad points. Still, there will be readers – like me – who remember the old Miami that had abundant, clean freshwater, no air pollution, little traffic congestion, a low crime rate, and good fishing, and wonder if Ms. Parks has really made an effort to give the reader an objective history of Miami's recent past.

While some may find problems in her treatment of Miami from 1945 to the present, I doubt if anyone will find much fault with the rest of the book. As a popular history of the site of Miami, from prehistoric times through World War II, it is hard to beat. Indeed, the author has performed an invaluable service to the community by providing a vehicle whereby Miami's newcomers can acquaint themselves with the history of their adopted city.

And they can do so relatively inexpensively. Considering the high level of bookmaking involved, "*The Magic City*" is a real bargain at \$24.95. The author is to be commended for gathering together an amazing array of previously unpublished maps and photographs, and Steven Brooke has done an outstanding job of reproducing them on film. The book is beautifully designed, the paper is of fine quality, and the photographs prove – once again – that "one picture is worth a thousand words."

John F. Reiger

Vicente Folch, Governor in Spanish Florida, 1787-1811. By David Hart White. Washington, D.C. 1981. University Press of America. Notes. Pp. vi, 111. Paper.

Juan Vicente Folch is best known in American history as the beleaguered governor of West Florida who, in 1811, offered to cede Mobile to the United States and then reneged. David White's little book places the episode in the context of a career which spanned 26 years in the colony at a time when Spanish colonial policy was in great confusion. Exhaustive examination of Folch's correspondence has enabled White to follow Folch's daily activities with great clarity. The difficulty of dealing with Indians who kept demanding gifts which cost money, the near impossibility of obtaining funds for this and other purposes, the lack of adequate military personnel to garrison an extensive and volatile frontier, the increasing pressure of American settlers and the international wars and rivalries of the period were daily matters of concern for the intrepid Folch. Hampered by the rigid Spanish bureaucracy, his nation's declining power in the world and, especially, in relation to the burgeoning United States, and the inability to deal effectively with the Indians, Folch managed to tread a narrow path between the various pitfalls which awaited him. He patiently attempted to keep relative peace between the Indian tribes and the settlers in West Florida, while trying to avoid direct confrontation with the Americans along borders which were not clearly defined. From the book emerges the portrait of an able, although sometimes stubborn, administrator whose patience was considerably greater than one might think of the man who offered in a moment of frustration to cede his nation's colony to an aggressive neighbor. Folch explained that he had never intended to follow through on the offer, but was

only playing for time. He had precious little to work with. Without supplies, pay, or reinforcements from his superiors, Folch was faced with threats from filibusters in Mobile Bay on the one side and the United States on the other. Spanish authorities were unimpressed by his explanations and, for a time, it appeared that he would be tried for treason. Charges were dropped, he was reassigned to Cuba, and was even promoted again before he retired in 1822, but his career was largely ended by his ambiguous negotiations with the Americans in 1811. Written in a matter-of-fact, unadorned style, *Americans in the book* is a lean account of Folch's public career in Florida. Although it reads as if the author were allowing the surviving correspondence to guide the story, it is a useful book because as White said, "the story of Spanish Florida is not complete without the name of Vicente Folch."

Jerrell H. Shofner

Iberville's Gulf Journals. By Pierre LeMoyne D'Iberville. Translated and edited by Richebourg G. Gaillard McWilliams. Tuscaloosa, 1981. University of Alabama Press. Maps. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 195. Cloth.

Between 1698 and 1702 French explorer and soldier Pierre LeMoyne D'Iberville (c1661-1706) made three voyages to the Gulf coast in behalf of the French Crown. During these voyages he explored the lower Mississippi River valley and planted the first permanent posts to assert French control of this strategically important area. The three journals of his voyages, dictated by him in France during the years 1699-1702, provide a day-to-day account of his travels and accomplishments on the Gulf coast and along the lower reaches of the Mississippi. Along with documenting the spadework of exploration on fort building, the journals give valuable glimpses of the tribes of native Americans, some soon to vanish, that Iberville encountered. They also illuminate the interplay of colonial rivalry between France, Spain and Britain for control of the Mississippi and influence with the native peoples inhabiting its valley. Incorporated with the journal of Iberville's second voyage is a subsidiary account by his brother, Jean-Baptiste LeMoyne d'Bienville, of an expedition through the waterlogged wilderness around the great river. Masterfully translated by Richebourg McWilliams, the Iberville journals are a useful tool for students of Louisiana and northern Gulf coast history.

Although his name is strongly associated with Louisiana, Iberville has been called the first Canadian hero. Born in New France around 1661, he played a prominent role in France's conflict against England in Canada. Having distinguished himself in King William's War (1689-1697), Iberville was selected by Louis XIV to reassert the French interests in the Mississippi established by LaSalle in 1684. The journals of Iberville's three expeditions in pursuit of this goal portray graphically the difficulties of venturing into virtually uncharted lands. Much effort was spent during the first voyage (December, 1698 to May, 1699) in simply finding the Mississippi and trying to reconcile the terrain and peoples encountered with those mentioned in LaSalle's accounts. The second (October, 1699 to May, 1700) and third (December, 1701 to April, 1702) voyages contain descriptions of the foundations of French posts like Biloxi and La Mobile from which La Louisianne was to develop as a French colony, of further travels among the tribes along the Mississippi, and of hardships encountered and surmounted.