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The P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History

Stephen Kerber

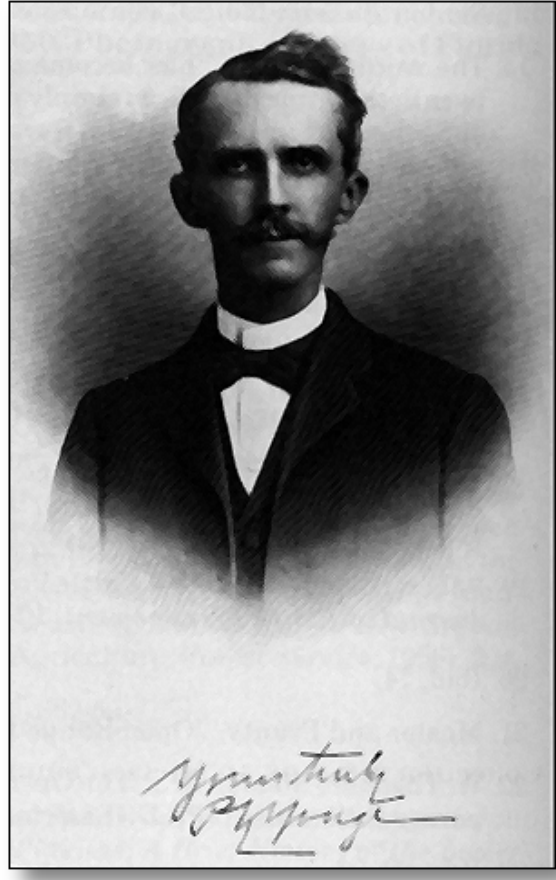
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Philip Keyes Yonge (1850-1934), c.1909.

Photograph courtesy of the P.K. Yonge Library.

THE P. K. YONGE LIBRARY OF FLORIDA HISTORY

by Stephen Kerber

The P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History is a special research collection of the University of Florida Libraries, Gainesville. The Yonge Library originated as the private collection of Julien Chandler Yonge (1879-1962) of Pensacola, historian and editor of the *Florida Historical Quarterly*, and of his father, Philip Keyes Yonge (1850-1934). In 1944, Dr. Rembert W. Patrick of the history faculty persuaded Julien Yonge to donate his unique collection of Floridiana to the University of Florida and to accept the responsibility of becoming the initial director of the library. In giving his valuable materials to the people of Florida without recompense, Julien Yonge did stipulate that the library should be named for his late father, a staunch advocate of quality public education and a multi-term member of the Board of Control, the supervising body



The staff of the P.K. Yonge Library (c. April 1950). Left to right: Dr. Rembert W. Patrick, faculty advisor; Harriet C. Schofield, cataloguer; Edward C. Williamson, collector of manuscripts; Julien Chandler Yonge, director.

Photograph courtesy of the P.K. Yonge Library.

for the state universities. In accepting the gift, the Board pledged that the Yonge Library would remain distinct and separate from the remainder of the library and that the goal of the collection would be to encourage and assist in the writing of Florida's history.

At first, the Yonge Library was "temporarily" housed in the Law College Building (now Nathan P. Bryan Hall) in the northeast corner of the historic University of Florida campus. There it remained until the post-World War II building boom at the university resulted in the expansion of the structure now known as Library East. The Yonge Library was relocated into larger quarters in this building in 1950. Another relocation, this to new and adequate facilities, took place in 1967 when the Library West building was opened. The Yonge Library remains today on the fourth floor of Library West, which is situated on the northern edge of the campus, facing the Plaza of the Americas quadrangle.

The P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History holds both primary and secondary historical source materials pertaining to all eras and aspects of Florida's past. The standard chronological periods are well-documented. Information about Florida's two Spanish epochs is available in the

photostats of the Stetson Collection and in microfilm of the *residencias* of the First Spanish Period governors (*Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Sevilla*); the East Florida Papers (Library of Congress); the *Papeles Procedentes de Cuba (AGI)*; the Papers of Vicente Sebastian Pintado (LC); and the *Justicia* and *Patronato* sections of the AGI. This body of documentation is the largest, richest, and most diverse collection of Southeastern Spanish borderlands materials to be found in the United States. Detailed finding guides and calendars to these documents have been created in recent years by the staff of the Yonge Library, but knowledge of Spanish and paleography is still mandatory for efficient use by researchers.

During the 1920s, John Batterson Stetson, Jr. (1884-1952), the moving force in the Florida State Historical Society, commissioned historian Irene Wright to make photostatic copies of key colonial Florida documents in the AGI. Before a change in Spanish archival policy brought a premature end to the project, Wright succeeded in procuring tens of thousands of photostats. The Stetson Collection remains, in effect, a sampling of the Florida materials in the AGI.

More comprehensive documentation is to be found among the *residencias* or reports of the investigations of the Florida governors held upon the completion of their terms of service. The term comprehensive may also be applied to the East Florida Papers. These are the archives of the Spanish administration in that province from 1784 to 1821. The comparable records pertaining to the province of West Florida have been microfilmed from among the *Papeles Procedentes de Cuba* section of the AGI. Additional film of Florida documents has been obtained from the AGI's *Patronato* section (records of judicial appeal cases before the Council of the Indies). The Pintado Papers are the private as well as the public correspondence of the deputy land surveyor of Louisiana, surveyor general of West Florida, and administrator of royal lands in Cuba, circa 1793-1831.

For the two decades of British domination in the Floridas, xerox and microfilm copies of many documents from the Public Records Office are available in the Yonge Library. Charles Andrews's classic *Guide to the Materials for American History, to 1783, in the Public Records Office of Great Britain* serves as a basic index to these categories of documents. Moreover, microfilm has been acquired of the Thomas Gage Papers (Clements Library, University of Michigan; also from the British Library); the Sir Guy Carleton Papers (PRO); the Sir Frederick



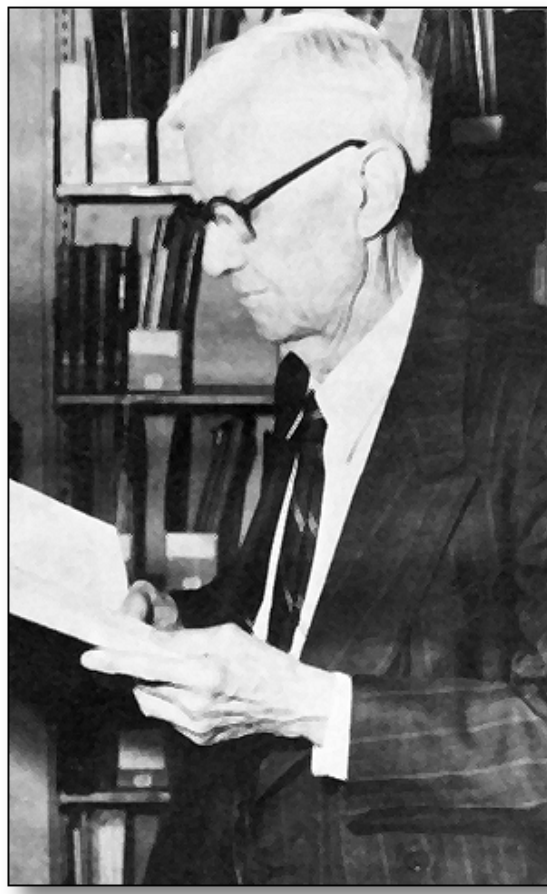
**John Batterson Stetson, Jr. (1884-1952).
Leader and patron of the Florida State
Historical Society.**

Photograph courtesy of the P.K. Yonge Library

Haldimand Collection (Public Archives of Canada; also from the British Library); and the Fulham Papers in the Lambeth Palace Library. The military, administrative, and diplomatic information contained in the papers of these two British commanders-in-chief in North America (Gage, 1763-1775; Carleton, 1782-1783), and the papers of Haldimand (Gage's brigadier for the southern department, 1765-1773), is supplemented by the religious information in the Fulham Papers. These last comprise the general correspondence and other communications directed to the Bishops of London from North America and the West Indies during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

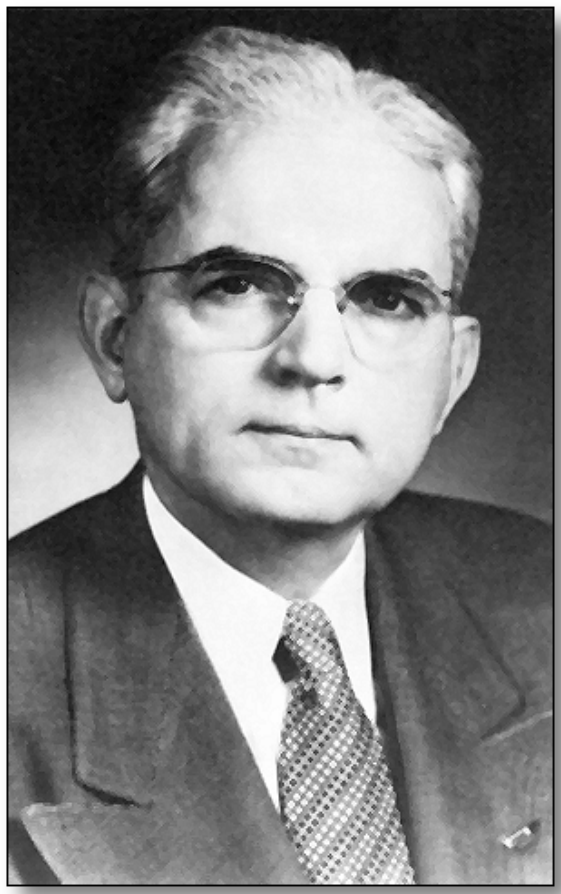
The evolution of a popular press in colonial British North America meant that events in frontier Florida would be reported and commented upon. In particular, newspapers of South Carolina and Georgia port cities described events in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Florida. The Yonge Library has obtained microfilm of many such Southern newspapers. The following Charleston, South Carolina papers are among them: *South Carolina Gazette* (1732-1775); *Times* (1800-1821); *Courier* (1803-1873); *Columbian Herald* (1787-1790); and *Mercury* (1822-1868). Accounts of Florida occurrences are likewise found in film of these Savannah, Georgia, newspapers: *Georgia Gazette* (1763-1770, 1774--1776, 1778-1796); *Gazette of Georgia* (1783-1788); *Georgia Republican and State Intelligence* (1802-1808); *Republican and Savannah Evening Ledger* (1808-1815); *Savannah Republican* (1817-1849); and *Morning News* (1850-1863; 1866-1910). Among the Milledgeville, Georgia, papers held are the: *Georgia Journal* (1809-1840); *Southern Recorder* (1820-1861); and *Federal Union* (1830-1862). While very few issues of newspapers published in the British Floridas have survived, newspapers did emerge on the scene early in territorial Florida. The Yonge Library is fortunate in having many such issues on microfilm.

In fact, the Florida newspaper holdings of the P.K. Yonge Library are quite extensive for the American period. Julien Yonge searched for and obtained microfilm of many nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Florida papers from the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and other major repositories. In addition to buying film from others, Julien Yonge initiated the Florida Newspaper Project by arranging for the services of a staff microphotographer. Through a network of family and professional contacts, Yonge arranged to borrow original issues of Florida papers from publishers and collectors and to have them microfilmed in Gainesville. In addition,



Julien Chandler Yonge (1879-1962).

Photograph courtesy of the P.K. Yonge Library.



Spessard Lindsey Holland (1892-1971).

Photograph courtesy of the P.K. Yonge Library.

black newspapers—the *Miami Times* and the Jacksonville *Florida Star*. Thanks to the combination of the purchase of film from other libraries, the activities of the Florida Newspaper Project, and the acquisition of current subscription film from Bell & Howell and other sources, the premier collection of extant Florida newspapers is to be found at the Yonge Library.

Some of the periodicals held by the Yonge Library are also kept in the microfilm format. Among these are the *Florida Catholic*, *Florida Baptist Witness*, *Florida Methodist Reporter*, and *Florida Food and Grocery News*. More numerous, however, are actual bound volumes of periodicals

he initiated continuing subscriptions to papers throughout the state and he had these subscription issues filmed on a regular basis. His goal in the latter instance was to make certain that at least one newspaper from each of Florida's sixty-seven counties would be preserved on microfilm, for he regarded newspapers as the key primary source for the history of Florida's American period.

Although today most major metropolitan dailies are filmed and marketed by Bell & Howell, the Florida Newspaper Project continues to flourish. Currently, papers from fifty-two cities are filmed. When a major microform supplier begins to film and to market a Florida paper, the Yonge Library discontinues its own filming. Among the papers now being preserved are two of the state's leading



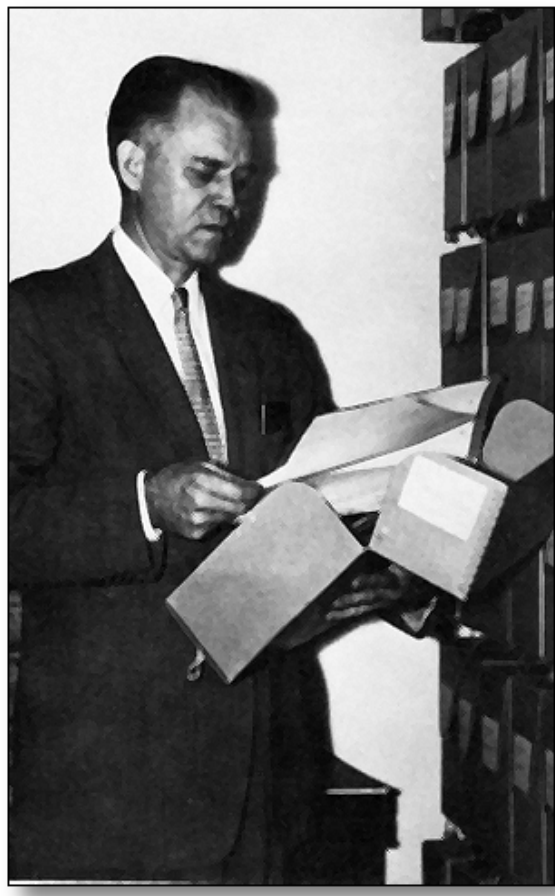
Park M. Trammell (1876-1936), c.1913.

Photograph courtesy of the P.K. Yonge Library.

such as *Florida Trend*, *Florida Scientist*, *Florida Anthropologist*, *Florida Architect*, *Florida Naturalist*, *Florida Bar Journal*, *Florida Cattleman*, *Florida Entomologist*, *Florida Agriculture*, *Florida Fireman*, *Florida Gardener*, *Florida Horticultural Society Proceedings*, *Florida Kiwanian*, *Florida Land Title News*, *Florida Banker*, *Florida Horse*, *Florida Municipal Record*, *Florida Realtor*, *Sheriff's Star*, *Soil Science Society of Florida Proceedings*, *Florida Truck News*, and *Florida Voter*. A variety of urban magazines and business publications, from *Miami/South Florida* to *Business and Economic Dimensions*, plus many religious journals, especially from the Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist denominations, are held.

Source materials in the Yonge Library for the study of government and politics since 1821 include both original volumes and microfilm of the *Laws of Florida*, the various compilations and the *Statutes*, and the legislative *Journals*. The activities of state agencies are recorded in the official reports of the Secretary of State, Treasurer, Commissioner of Agriculture, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and other cabinet and senior officers. The selection of state documents in the Yonge Library is not intended to be definitive, since reports of all state agencies are maintained by the documents department of the University Libraries.

For the same reason, many but not all federal documents pertaining to Florida are located in the Yonge Library. A number of census publications and the *Territorial Papers* are available, as are several series of the *American State Papers*, and a variety of separately-catalogued U.S. House and U.S. Senate documents. Microfilm editions of federal documents are also held. Among these are National Archives-produced microfilm of the compiled service records of Florida Union and Confederate soldiers and Indian wars soldiers; of Freedmen's Bureau records; and of census population schedules (1830-1910). Land records on microfilm include materials from the U.S. General Land Office; the complete Florida tract books from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management; and the archives of the U.S. Commissioners for Ascertaining Claims and Titles to Lands in East Florida (Spanish land grants confirmed or denied at the time of acquisition by the United States). Agricultural data is included in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service Reports (1909-1944).



Dr. Rembert W. Patrick (1909-1967). Editor of the *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 1955-1962.

The map collection of the Yonge Library relates to the Southeastern United States and the Caribbean, as well as to the geographical area of the present-day state. The collection consists of over 1,900 originals and copies, which are shelved by date and accession (PKY) number. Two card indexes provide analysis of the map collection. One index is arranged in chronological order; the second is organized according to the subject of each individual map. The collection includes maps dating from circa 1500 through 1945.

Among the major manuscripts held by the P.K. Yonge Library are the papers of politician and railroad entrepreneur David Levy Yulee; Governor William Sherman Jennings and civic/environmental activist May Mann Jennings; Governor Napoleon B. Broward; Democratic Party chairman James Hodges of Lake City; Senator Charles Andrews; Governor and Senator Spessard Holland; Governor Millard Caldwell; legislator and dairy farmer Ernest Graham; Congressman Paul Rogers and his father, Congressman Dwight Rogers. Here, too, are the papers of historian/archivists Jeannette Thurbur Connor and Elizabeth Howard West; the Chase family (Sanford, Florida; citrus); the Florida section, American Chemical Society; the Florida Society of American Foresters; archaeologist John Goggin; Jacksonville historian T. Frederick Davis; the Stephens-Bryant families (Civil War; St. Johns River); and the Florida District Land Office Records of the U.S. General Land Office. A large assortment of miscellaneous manuscripts, diaries, and ledgers supplements the major manuscript collections.

The secondary source materials in the Yonge Library include county and community histories; M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations; and thematic and chronological studies focusing upon an assortment of eras, events, and individuals. In this last category, research carried out in the Yonge Library has resulted recently in dissertation/biographies of Nathan Mayo, May Mann Jennings, and Park Trammell. A substantial number of archaeological studies has been assembled, too. Fittingly, the editorial functions of the *Florida Historical Quarterly*, which is based at the university, still rely upon the materials in the Yonge Library. These materials include other historical journals, such as *Tequesta*, *Tampa Bay History*, *Escribano*, *New River News*, *Apalachee*, plus Southern state journals and the *Journal of Southern History*.

Researchers considering a visit to the library are advised to consult the published *Catalog of the P.K. Yonge Library of Florida History*, four volumes (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1977), which gives a much more complete listing of holdings than this brief summary. For a discussion of Julien C. Yonge, his collection, and his career as editor of the *Quarterly*, see: Rembert W. Patrick, "Julien Chandler Yonge," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 41 (October 1962), pages 102-115.