

NEW BOOKS AND ORGANIZATIONS

THE LOOMIS FAMILY IN AMERICA (1908 ed.), one of America's oldest, most prestigious genealogies, has just been reprinted by a California attorney. This reprint is one of the largest, single name genealogies ever assembled. It contains over 13,000 family histories and provides an abundant fifteen section index to trace family members. Among its entries the index lists authors, inventors, war veterans, Loomises on the first U. S. census of 1790, Who's Who in the Loomis Family, and those whose mother was born Loomis. The volume also contains an extensive Old World history, tracing the family back to 1330. The 992 page, six pound, 7½ x 10" genealogy is bound in sturdy buckram. Inquiries and orders should be sent to John E. Loomis, 426 T W Patterson Bldg., Fresno, CA 93721. Cost is \$50.00 plus \$2.25 for postage and handling (Calif. residents add \$3.00 tax).

TAMPA BAY HISTORY magazine is pleased to announce the creation of an essay contest. First prize is one hundred dollars (\$100), and fifty dollars (\$50) goes to the runner-up. In addition, winning articles will be published in TBH. Manuscripts should be approximately 2500-5000 words and typewritten, double-spaced with footnotes at the end. Entries can deal with any aspect of the history of the fifteen county Tampa Bay region including Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota counties. Articles must be based on historical research. The editorial staff and members of the advisory board are not eligible. The deadline for submission is September 1, 1982. For more information about the contest, contact: Managing Editor, TAMPA BAY HISTORY, Department of History, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620.

RECREATING THE 1838-1839 CONSTITUTION CONVENTION

Port St. Joe, Florida--The interesting history of this area, is one of significance to all Floridians. During the territorial period of 1820-1845, St. Joseph, as it was known until 1910, was established as a major gulfcoast shipping port. Previous visits by the Apalachee Indians, the Spanish, French and English failed to establish a permanent settlement in the region.

The real history of this town is said to have begun on March 17, 1835, when a Supreme Court decision reuled in favor of John Forbes and Co. and recognized their property rights to an earlier Spanish Land Grant. This made squatters of many long established Apalachicola citizens who had built a lucrative port of trade at the mouth of the Apalachicola River. Rather than risk losing the prosperous river traffic, some of the enterprising citizens developed the idea of a new town on St. Joseph's Bay, 28 miles to the west and just outside the limits of the Forbes Purchase. The first steam railroad in Florida, and one of the first in the nation, began construction in order to provide transportation of goods from the Apalachicola River and docks at Lake Wimico to the new port.

The most remarkable undertaking Florida had ever seen up until that time, or for many years to come, was in full swing. The chief interests backing up the project being the financial institutions. Intensive speculation and overdevelopment ensued and by 1838, St. Joseph was the largest city in Florida with 6,000 inhabitants plus numerous