

all the guests that he could accommodate and I. D. Hart's abode had no vacant space. Abraham Bellamy offered the use of his 10x12 law office recently erected next to Brady's old cabin, and W. G. Dawson went further and spread blankets on the floor of his store for some of the overflow to sleep. L. Z. Hogans, over on the hill beyond the swamp, played host to one or two. So Jacksonville and vicinity went to bed that night crowded to capacity.

When the morning glow of Monday (December 1st) began to brighten over the roadside settlement on the St. Johns, it was the dawn of a new day for Duval County. By 10 o'clock, 200 people had assembled in the vicinity of Market and Forsyth Streets to witness the convening of the first regular court of law held in this part of the country. It was an impressive spectacle. Standing bareheaded, with no roof above them except the forest trees, they listened intently to the words of Judge Joseph L. Smith in the opening proceedings of what was then called the Superior court. The ceremony was new to the most of them, but all were apparently pleased with the scene, signifying that civil law had stepped in to take the place of the long established custom of personal settlement of differences.^d

*The corner-stone of the handsome junior high school in Springfield was laid in 1923, and the building dedicated to the memory of General Edmund Kirby Smith, the famous Confederate general, who fought for the just cause as he saw it. There is also another association here, for it was the centennial of the event described above, when General Smith's father established the cause of justice for the county at Jacksonville.

First Grand Jury

From among those assembled at the opening proceedings of the court, a grand jury was drawn and impanelled the next day, December 2, 1823. The members of this first grand jury of Duval County were: John Bellamy, foreman; Stephen J. Eubanks, John Houston, Isaac Tucker, Charles Broward, Seymour Pickett, John Broward, John Price, James Dell, William Matthews, Cotton Rawls, A. G. Loper, Llewellyn Williams, Charles Seton, John D. Braddock, J. C. Houston, Nathaniel Wilds, Stephen Vinzant.^c