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 blan-
kets 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) be-
gan 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 reg-
ular 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.

*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 Confed-
erate general, who fought for the just cause as he saw it.
There is also another association here, for it was the centen-
nial 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, Sey-
mour 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.