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Triumph in recalling a golden age

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



'TRIUMPH IN RECALLING A GOLDEN AGE'

By HAMPTON DUNN

MIAMI --- There could be no more appropriate or finer setting for the Dade County Art Museum than "Vizcaya," the Italian-style palazzo created by James Deering the bachelor farm equipment magnate.

National Geographic magazine, a good judge of such things, describes Vizcaya as "a triumph in recalling a golden age of art and architecture ... a repository of Italian decorative art, unexcelled in America."

When the International Harvester executive in 1914 started construction of a dream palace to house his marvelous collection of treasures from Europe, it caused a boomlet in the town of Miami (pop. then, 10,000). He employed more than 1,000 Miamians plus hundreds of artisans from Europe.

In addition to the magnificent home, the 10-acre formal garden is also an attraction. And, as a breakwater, offshore from the steps leading to Biscayne Bay, there is a sculptured barge, a stone version of Cleopatra's .

Cost of the estate has been variously estimated from five million to 15 millions. Whatever it was, Deering spared no expense. He wanted weathered tiles, so he sent agents to Cuba with instructions to buy the roof s of entire villages.

Vizcaya was opened on Christmas Day, 1916. He often entertained famous friends, but there were no "wild parties." Deering enjoyed living in his palace only 810 days. He died aboard ship while returning from Europe in 1925.

In 1952, Dade County bought Vizcaya for \$1, 000, 000.

