

January 1960

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Dunn, Hampton, "Seminole County never built a court house" (1960). *Hampton Dunn Phototouring Florida Collection*. 292.

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



SEMINOLE COUNTY NEVER BUILT A COURT HOUSE

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SANFORD --- Although Seminole County was created by the Legislature in 1913, it has yet to build its first court house! It is the only county in the state which has never constructed the county building. The seat of the county government is situated in a brick structure which was built in 1917 as an Elks Club lodge hall and then sold to the county for a court house in 1919.

This county was named for the Indian tribe which was found in power when Florida was discovered, and of which there remains a small tribe at this time. Strange, it seems, that so historic a name should have gone unclaimed until 1913. Seminole was carved from Orange County and is the 50th of the state's 67 counties.

Sanford was named to honor Gen. Henry Shelton Sanford, a New Englander who had served in President Lincoln's administration, who pioneered in the development of this community. At one time this was known as Mellonville, the site of the original Fort Mellon.

Some significant history, involving the Seminoles (meaning "wild" in red man's language), occurred here. In 1837, a delegation of Cherokee Indians came here from Washington with instructions to meet with the Seminole chiefs and arrange for peaceful withdrawal of the Florida-based Indians to Oklahoma. The Seminoles agreed to the Cherokees' proposal to move peacefully--but soon decided that they would not leave Florida. And that is what the Second Seminole War was all about.

